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Winning a primitive people

WINNING A PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

A Fowl House

It is made of the bark of a large tree, and is elevated on forked poles for protection from hyenas, etc. Fowls are the coppers of native currency as cattle are the gold. The barter price of a fowl is about twopence.

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WINNING A PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

SIXTEEN YEARS' WORK AMONG THE WARLIKE TRIBE OF THE NGONI AND THE SENGA AND TUMBUKA PEOPLES OF CENTRAL AFRICA

BY

DONALD FRASER

AUTHOR OF
"THE FUTURE OF AFRICA," &c.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

JOHN R. MOTT, LL.D., F.R.G.S.

WITH 27 ILLUSTRATIONS & 2 MAPS

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TO THE MEMORY OF

REV. DR. GEORGE ROBSON

A MISSIONARY STATESMAN
AND LEADER

INTRODUCTION

By Dr. J. R. MOTT

ONE of the outstanding tasks of the present generation is that of hastening the civilization and Christianization of Africa. No part of this undertaking is more pressing than that which concerns the many tribes in the interior. The volume of Mr. Donald Fraser, which deals with a comparatively limited area and population, sets forth with vividness and with fascinating detail the facts essential to an understanding of the problems involved in the transformation of primitive peoples. Here one sees communities passing from indolence, ignorance, superstition, and lawlessness into thrift, intelligence, reasonable faith, and well-ordered life. The essential contribution made by Christian Missions in accomplishing these remarkable changes is illustrated with fulness and fairness. If one wishes to know exactly the life and work of the modern missionary in Africa, this book will show him.

Mr. Fraser was one of the founders of the Student Christian Movement of the British Isles, and has also done much to further missionary life and activity among the students of the Continent of Europe and of North America. The favour of vision and the spirit of unselfish enthusiasm

which enabled him to interest and kindle the students of Europe and America, manifest themselves in these pages. The reader can hardly fail to be inspired to give expression to the larger knowledge and the fresh impulses here received.

J. R. M.

PREFACE

FEW books have been published dealing intimately with the people of Nyasaland, and still fewer, written by residents, which describe the extraordinary productive work of missions in this most interesting colony. The wild adventurous days have passed away, and every year is seeing great changes coming over these primitive peoples. Civilization is changing the whole social condition of the natives, and the old tribal order is disappearing. If some account of how these people used to live, and of how the new forces altered their conditions, is to be given from first-hand knowledge, it must be given now. My hope is that this attempt to describe the people as they were, and to relate in plain fashion the incidents of pioneer missionary work, may stimulate some of my fellow-missionaries to commit to writing what they know about the people among whom they live.

It has been my privilege to live among two typical races of the great continent. The one, the Ngoni, are a people who were formed out of the motley gathering of many races, and organized into a cohesive nation by the discipline of war, and the genius of great military chiefs. They originally belonged to the nations who live south of the Zambesi, and retain a slightly modified Zulu as their dialect. The history of their movements gives a key to much that was written by Livingstone in his books of travel. And they are typical of the way in which great warrior tribes have arisen in Central Africa, who, for a time, have exercised an immense

influence on the continent. Some account of the fiercer days of their activity as well as of the hazardous work of the mission in meeting their warlike designs, is given in Dr. Elmslie's "Among the Wild Ngoni." I write of the days after the victory of peace had been quietly won by unostentatious mission work.

The other tribe, the Tumbuka, in whose land the Ngoni finally settled, are an example of those whose history is being lost to the world because, through internal dissensions, they have ceased to have any disciplined unity. They represent the weak and more effeminate tribes of Central Africa, and are a strong contrast to the robust vehemence of the warlike peoples of the South. Their customs give one some idea of the miserable social structure of a tribe which acknowledged no ruling head, and which was held together by the minute restraints of magical superstitions.

I have endeavoured to make the conditions of life among these people more interesting by relating the greater part of the history in the form of personal narrative, and may seem, therefore, not to have given the acknowledgment which is due to my able colleagues in the country.

What these regions owe to the long and patient work of my fellow-missionaries, Dr. Elmslie and the Rev. Charles Stuart, as well as to the others who have given their lives for the regeneration of the people, no one can estimate. And I, as their appreciative disciple, would pay my humble debt of acknowledgment.

The mission to which I belong is the Livingstonia Mission, which was founded in 1875, in memory of the great African traveller. Its pioneers were the first Europeans to settle in those restless regions, and to hold the land for civilization and Christianity. They were soon followed by commerce, and then by Government, when a Protectorate was established by Lord Salisbury in 1890, in answer to the urgent demands of the missionary societies, and the colonists,

whose presence was constantly threatened by inter-tribal warfare, and the ravages of the slave-raiders.

For years the early missionaries lived in peril of their lives, cut off for long intervals from communicating with Europe, seeing the activity of slave-traders along the Lake shore, and threatened constantly by the wild plundering activities of the Ngoni. Meanwhile, the Arabs were pressing down from three or four different points, and the whole of the Lake regions were in danger of becoming a great Mohammedan slaving empire threatening disaster to the defenceless tribes, and menacing the progress of civilization. By the timely occupation of strategic points, and the final intervention of the British Government with armed forces, these perils were overcome, and to-day the tribes living to the west of the Lake Nyasa live in prosperous security, advancing at a great pace towards an industrial and progressive civilization. Mohammedanism is scarcely a recognizable quantity in any of the tribes among which the Livingstonia Mission is stationed, while Christianity is rapidly becoming the nominal religion, at least, of the people. A large educational system has been developed, and, although we have only eight European stations, there are 787 schools, and 52,000 pupils under our supervision. Thousands of the people are able to read and write. A large institute at Livingstonia, under Dr. Laws, is training skilled native artizans, teachers, preachers, and these people, who, a generation ago, were utterly barbarous, to-day send forth scores of builders, carpenters, printers, clerks, and intelligent helpers to the Europeans who are rapidly raising these lands into commercial prosperity.

As a Christian missionary, I must also record the extraordinary advance which our religion has made, for, in it, I believe, the hope of the continent lies. While I acknowledge the blessing of commerce, and good government, and

civilization, I cannot see that these by themselves will ever lift a savage people into permanent and progressive prosperity, or emancipate them from the degrading superstitions of animism, which only make the veneer of Western life ludicrous and dangerous. In these regions the progress that has been made is built upon a Christian foundation, and the removing of old magical and communistic restraints has been accompanied by the creation of a Christian law and conscience. There is now a church within our mission with 8,200 members in full communion, besides 8,500 catechumens and 13,000 enquirers. In these, through the power of living religion, and its continual creation of a new social conscience, and its activity in propagating itself, will be found the guarantee of the future.

What is written in this volume may help to illustrate the progress of this new era which is breaking in a land which was once so degraded.

By the courtesy of the editor of "The Times," I am able to reproduce the chapter on annexation by the British Government, from an account of this event which I sent to that paper.

Finally, let me acknowledge my debt to those who have assisted me with this volume. To my publishers, for their patience and suggestions, to my wife for her revision of my MS., to the Rev. J. Fairley Daly, who has placed at my disposal the photographs taken by my fellow-missionaries. I have been unable to trace all those whose photographs are published now, but conspicuous among them are Dr. Elmslie, W. Duff Macgregor, Rev. Charles Stuart, Rev. W. Murray. Others whom I have not named will be glad to see their works reproduced here, if they increase interest in the effort to redeem the regions of Central Africa, though I have not acknowledged them by name.

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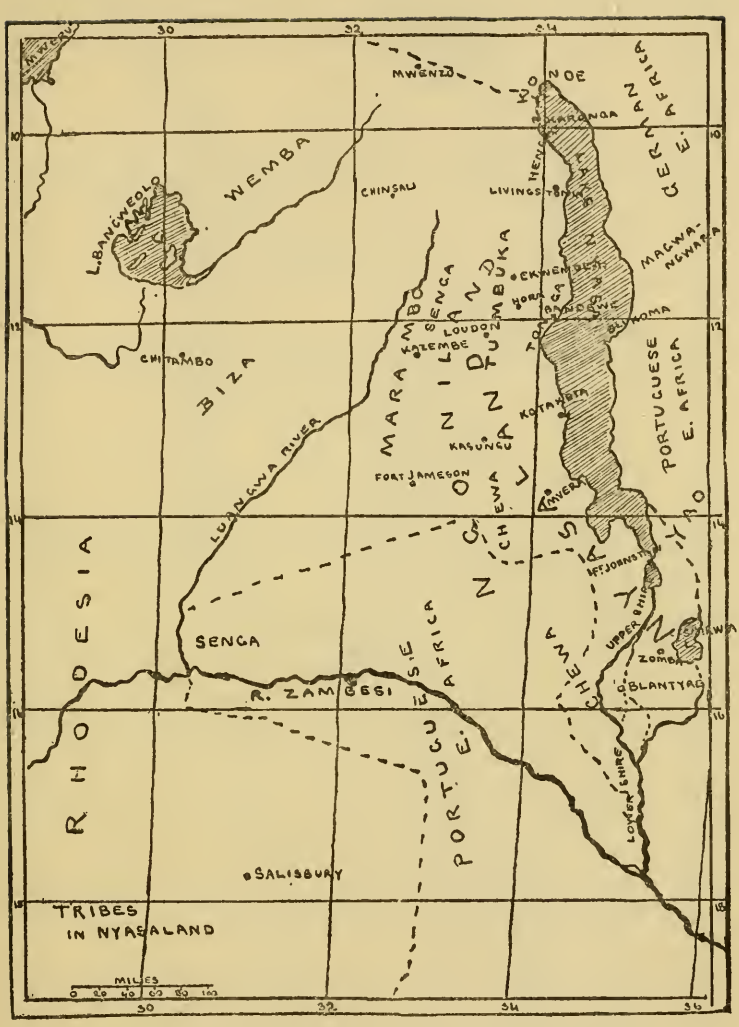
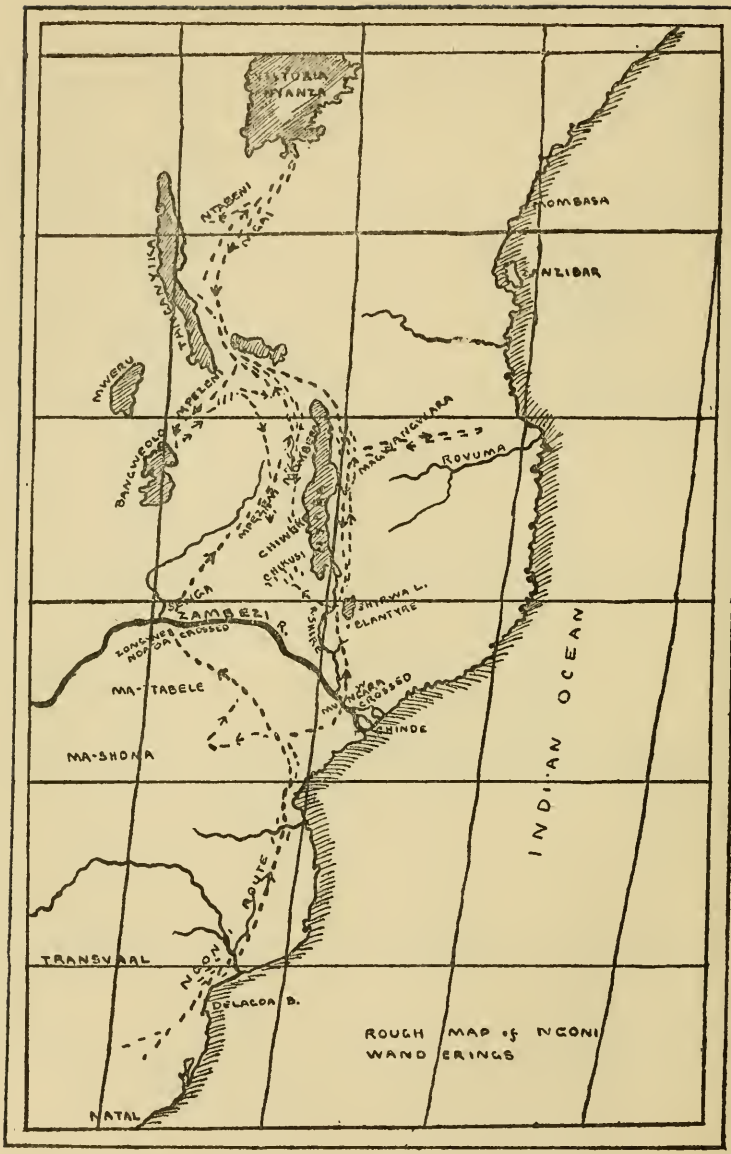


MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE TRIBES IN NYASALAND



MAP SHOWING THE WANDERINGS OF THE NGONI

WINNING A PRIMITIVE PEOPLE

PART I. FIRST EXPERIENCES

CHAPTER I

ARRIVAL

TOWARDS the close of the year 1896 I landed from a little Portuguese coasting vessel at the Chinde mouth of the River Zambesi, on my way to the Livingstonia Mission. For three months I had been travelling round the schools and colleges of the South African Colonies and States, speaking on behalf of the missionary enterprise, and at last I had entered at the gateway of the Africa of wild romance which has always appealed to every one who has the heart of a boy. In a day or two a little flat-bottomed stern-wheeler, in which I was one of three or four passengers, was slowly threading its way between the sand-banks of the great shining river, and every hour of the hot, fierce day was full of new wonder and interest. Sometimes we passed a school of great hippopotami, whose heads were showing above the water, sometimes rifles cracked at crocodiles that were sunning themselves on a sand spit, and every day we spent hours digging ourselves out of some shallow in which the little steamer had run aground.

We tied up at the river-bank at night, and passed the quiet hours till bed-time, talking on deck, while the fires of the crew burned with a golden light on the shore by our side, and naked youths cooked their porridge and indulged in "friendly yells" by way of conversation.

After ten days of delicious travel up the Zambesi, and then north up the Shire tributary, we climbed for forty miles to Blantyre, where we rested for a week in a very "garden of the Lord," and then travelled by "machilla" to the upper reaches of the Shire. Here we joined the little stern-wheeler *Monteith*, which had just been launched, and were carried in her first voyage to Fort Johnstone at the south end of Lake Nyasa.

Two or three days' waiting was necessary in the dismal swamp on which the township at that time stood, and then we boarded the historic steamer *Ilala*, and began a week's voyage in her confined quarters, over the wonderful waters of Lake Nyasa. It was a privilege to sail in this old steamer, for she had been the pioneer of all the traffic in these inland regions. For twenty years she had been maintaining communications between the isolated European communities of the Lake district and the outside world. She had carried missionaries to their lonely stations, had overshadowed the Arab slave dhows, had brought soldiers and cannon to the relief of beleagured whites, and had been shot at by men who would turn back the advancing stream of civilization. Many and many a time her rotting plates had been renewed, fresh pieces of machinery had been introduced, until now, besides her framework, there was little left of her original self.

On Christmas Day we were off Monkey Bay in a wild storm. The waves were washing over the vessel and sending floods of water into the little deck-house which was our cabin. In it were crowded a table in the centre and a bench on either side, converted in the night-time into beds for the

captain and his passenger. When the wind and waves at last proved too strong for us, and we could make no headway, we turned about, and ran for the shelter of Monkey Bay. Here, in a land-locked harbour, where the hills rise precipitously on either side, clad to their summits with trees, we found the captain and engineer of the *Domira* lodged in a little hut, and busily engaged in overhauling their ship which was beached a few yards off.

The night we spent there eating our Christmas dinner by lamp-light, under a cloud of mosquitoes, moths, and innumerable flying insects, is one of the marked days of my life in Central Africa, for there I met " Captain " Chalmers, one of the kindliest and most Christian souls in the Protectorate. For many years he was skipper of the African Lakes Corporation steamer on Nyasa, the personal friend of every missionary who sailed its waters. Some settlers used to laugh at his lack of hurry which never saw necessity for working his steamer on a Sunday, and at his plans which generally found him anchored near a mission station when the day of rest came round. But for natives and Europeans alike, there is no more Christian figure standing out in these hard and deadly days, than that of the grey-bearded and simple Rothesay fisherman, who passed them on to the ports of their destination so cautiously and so kindly.

When we came in sight of Bandawe some days after, all the romance and glory of mission life in Central Africa lay before us. Far away on that narrow plain beyond the shore Dr. Livingstone had tramped with two native companions thirty-five years before, seeing the putrid bodies of people slain by the Ngoni, and passing fugitives who were hiding in stockades built within thickets which protected them from that bloody hill tribe. Farther along the coast his boat had been chased by pirates in their canoes, and with difficulty had escaped.

But we steamed over a quiet lake, and as we neared the shore we could see scores of canoes bobbing in the swell while the fishers cast their nets. Beyond a white fringe of sand there stretched long lines of native villages, and above them rose a green bank of gardens, and then a wall of trees. Peeping through the trees were the houses of the mission station, with their thatched roofs and wide verandahs, every one of them speaking like a book to those who knew, telling of war and peace, of hard work and uproarious fun, of sickness and death. There had stayed, as guests or as residents, men who had hunted the wildest game, or fought with Arabs and savages; men who had travelled over great tracks of the interior, and had rested there before plunging into the unknown, or recruited there after months or years of hard and lonely adventure. Men had built those houses and had lived in them who had seen the bloody slaving days, had been through war alarms and fightings, had taught in the atmosphere of cruel paganism, and now saw this day too, when the sun shone bright on the calm waters of the lake, and gardens waved green with abundant crops, and villagers worked and played by the water's edge with the shouts and laughter of a perfect peace.

There is the rocky hill on the right where the people fled in hundreds before the sudden raid of the Ngoni *impi*. There to the left is the big tree where a great hunter, who raced the fleetest antelopes on foot, used to put on the garments of civilization when he made his occasional visit to the mission. And there below the trees lies a little plot with white crosses which mark the graves of missionary, and hunter, and soldier who had fallen in the fight to win this fair land for peace.

The next few days were spent at Bandawe amid the continual hum of humanity. All day the mission station was never empty. When the evenings drew on the sound of village play came to us from all sides—the laughing and dancing of the children, the lowing of cattle, the liquid sounds

of the native piano beating out its untiring rhythm, and then, as the sun went down, horn and drum calling villagers to evening prayer.

On New Year's day the mission grounds were alive with people, for an exhibition of native work and produce had been organized by Dr. Prentice. Then followed the sports —running, leaping, canoe races, and a score of different events which exhibited a minimum of athleticism and a maximum of laughter and good-natured noise. Sunday was packed full of meetings, and the meetings packed full of people. When we entered the crowded school, into which about a thousand people had squeezed themselves, we were met with a blast of hot-smelling air. The windows were all open, but were blocked by human bodies, and the air smelled of Africans, and fish, and rancid oil. No wonder the preachers were collapsed and pale when the evening fell.

In a few days my caravan was ready, and I started towards the hills, for the Mission Council had appointed me to Ngoniland to relieve Dr. Elmslie, whose furlough was due. It was only a two days' march, but surely more interesting than any journey I had yet made in all my wanderings on two civilized continents. We passed through villages, along the shore of the lake, marching barefoot through its breaking wavelets. We crossed rivers in canoes, crept through thickets, climbed tree-covered hills, spent a night in tent in the silence of the woods, climbed and descended rolling savannahs five thousand feet above sea-level, while fresh strong wind blew all about us, and at last plunged into the scrub which proclaimed the edge of the inhabited plateau where the Ngoni live.

An hour afterwards the little mission station of Ekwendeni suddenly appeared, three grass-roofed houses rising from a sea of green-leafed bush. Just as we emerged on the open space that surrounded the little school-church we were met

by Dr. Elmslie and Mr. Stuart. It was with some awe and shyness that I saw the two men with whom I was to spend many years of happy colleagueship. Dr. Elmslie came up to welcome me—a tall, thin Aberdonian, dressed in an old knickerbocker suit. The last time I had seen him was one wintry day five years before when he passed through our Theological College quadrangle, wrapped in a great overcoat, while the students gave him ringing cheers for a never-to-be-forgotten speech he had delivered in college a few days before. Mr. Stuart, likewise an Aberdonian, notable for sanity and thoroughness, I saw now for the first time.

We walked together up the little bush-fringed road to Dr. Elmslie's house, and there found Mrs. Elmslie, and her two little boys. And that day I began to know the quiet heroism, and sweet motherliness that have given Mrs. Elmslie a unique place among us.

We were soon sitting down to tea, round a table which made one forget all the ramshackle untidiness of Africa. On the whitest of tablecloths were spread shining dishes, plates of cakes and scones, and home-made bread, and everything that could make a Scots-fed man smile with appetite and satisfaction.

When tea was over, and darkness fell, we gathered together in the study, and soon the past and the present of these men who had seen the hard and patient days of service, began to float before me. Story followed story, telling of *impis* gathering, preparations for flight, days of sore crisis when a dark night was spreading all about them. Days of secret and timid seeking of Christ, when the hearts of some were touched. Stories of impertinent harassments by the chiefs, of thieving, and fearful punishments ; of drunkenness and heartless cruelty ; and stories too of pawky retaliations, of friendly interventions, of crimes and wars prevented, of a gradual breaking of light and peace. But none of the tales of that night, and of the nights that followed, thrilled

me more than when they told of Dr. Steel, whose vacant post I had come to fill. And I saw the plucky and indefatigable little man, regardless of his own comfort, moving about with restless energy, enduring fatigue and hunger, facing mighty odds undaunted, healing and preaching, making his long marches with no impedimenta but his medicine-box, a blanket, a pot and a pumpkin, and no caravan but his single boy ; or riding on his wilful donkey which led him whither it would, and dropped him in streams, or threw him head first into convenient bushes by the way ; until at last, worn with work, and neglect of his own comfort, he lay down and died in this house where we sat and talked.

During those first days a feeling of disappointment came over me. At Bandawe one had seen crowds of people, and was never free from the sound of village life. But here only one or two villages were visible from the station, and we seemed to be set amid the silence of the hills. When I mentioned my feeling to Dr. Elmslie, he rose and asked me to come with him. He led me then to a tree-crowned hillock just behind the station, and there he opened my eyes. A few yards below us lay the little station built in a cup and surrounded by rising ground. But now he showed the land around, and helped me gradually to pick out from the heavy green bush that covered it, village after village, until at last the whole landscape seemed alive with men and women.

To me there is no sweeter scene in all the world than that which may be seen from this hill-top, and there the new station is now built. You see what seems to be a great broken plain, through which two or three rivers run. In the dry season it is hard and barren looking, pimpled with huge bare ant-hills, but when the verdure and foliage come with the rains its roughness is softened by the sweetest green.

Here and there throughout the plain are large villages from which the smoke lazily rises on a quiet evening, and from which you may hear, on moonlight nights, the thud

and manly defiant song of the Zulu dancers. The landscape is shut in ten or fifteen miles away by a series of imposing rocky hills, whose outlines soften into most satisfying irregularity when the sun goes down behind them.

On the left is Njenjewe Mountain, round whose summit the mists gather in rolling white. There the Tumbuka people built for themselves a great tower to reach to heaven, for there was a flood all over the land, they say. For days and weeks they cut the great timber of the forest and built higher and higher till their heads were in the clouds. But all the time, while they were so busy, the little white ants were eating away the base of the tower, and one day when all the people were high up building, the ants had completed their work, and down came Babel with a mighty smash and all were killed. And if you won't believe the story, I know men who, with their own eyes have seen the bones of the victims, so they say.

In front of us stands Bwabwa, most beautiful of all, in the fine symmetry of its shape. And it too has its tragedy, for thirty years ago or more there was a rising among the Tumbuka, and the rebels fled to its rocky summit, where they were closed round and slain. Far to the south, twenty-five miles away, if you climb a little higher, you may see the top of Hora, a bare upright rocky hill, where scores of these poor rebels fled. And to this day you may pick up in the caves about its summit the bones and skulls of those who perished of thirst, rather than come down to the Ngoni army that sat below and watched their destruction. Away on the right is a long range of hills, and if you look well you will see one more than twenty miles off with a rocky top. There the sub-god Chikang'ombe lives. He is the god of the rains which come to the Henga people, and he sits among the mists that creep about the summit, and in the wild cataract which rushes through the gorge below. Some have seen him in the old days. His body is like a great

A Slave Dhow

This Arab boat is crossing the lake. There were three or four slave ferries on the lake, by which a continuous stream of slaves was carried across on their long, trying march to Zanzibar.

Fishers

The canoes are being pushed off for an evening's fishing. A heap of nets is seen in the nearest canoe, and the fishers have long bamboo poles for pushing in the shallows. The lake is calm, but it is often very rough, and then no fish can be got.

Mending Nets

Here Tonga fishermen are repairing their nets in the shade of trees. A tobacco pipe and goatskin pouch lie on the net for their refreshment.

snake and he has the mane of a lion at his head. When the wind rushes wildly with the thunderstorm, Chikang'ombe is on a journey, and you may trace his goings by the maize that has been broken and uprooted.

Farther north you may see another mountain, clad on its summit with dark primeval forest almost impenetrable, and there too a great tower was built to reach to heaven. But the people were building this one because they found the land too narrow, and they would seek new gardens in heaven. And after they had attained to a great height, one cried, "Stop, we need build no farther. See here are roots hanging down out of the skies." So they seized the roots and began to climb hand-over-hand to reach the new land. Then when all were clinging to the roots, the weight was very great, and the roots brake, and down came all the people to earth, killed, so great was their fall. Around the base of the hill the descendants of the few survivors of that clan still live, and trace back their history to this calamity. A week or two after my arrival I was walking alone by the banks of the Lunyangwa river one day, half a mile from Dr. Elmslie's house. My imagination was alive with all the stories I had heard during those evening talks, when I was startled by seeing a long line of armed men coming down the path leading to the river. Each man carried a great shield, and a club and spear. Some of them had on their heads a round ring of waxed hair, the insignia of the married warrior. They wound down the twisting path in silence, while I stared with wide open eyes at the threatening apparition. I was not long in turning and making for home. But I had not been seated many minutes on the verandah when the band of warriors arrived, and they marched up to the house, and squatted solemnly before it.

Dr. Elmslie came out and sat down.

"Sinibona (we see you)," he said in a dry voice.

"Yebo (yes)," they answered in strong bass as one man.

When these formal greetings were over, they began to state their business. And when they had finished the doctor told me who they were, and what they wanted. There were Muzukuzuku, the chief at Hora, and his men. For three years a European had been stationed among them, and had then been removed to the Tanganyika Plateau, but when he went a promise had been made that another would be sent some day to take his place. And I had been appointed, and my boxes, which had preceded me, had all been sent on there, but now carriers had gone on to bring them back to Ekwendeni. So Muzukuzuku had come to protest against his European being taken from him.

Dr. Elmslie explained that he was about to leave for Scotland on furlough, and he thought it was not wise to place a young man just out from home all alone at Hora, and it was better that I should be at Ekwendeni with Mr. Stuart for some time. The matter was argued back and forward, but the Hora people were not satisfied. Yet Dr. Elmslie wisely would not yield. Then a young bullock was brought along and given to the strangers to eat in the evening, and they shouted their thanks and retired.

And thus I met those who were to be my neighbours and best friends for many a year to come, yet at the river I had turned from them, as if they were men coming with wicked designs. And the little incident was but a repetition of many a similar misunderstanding, from the days when da Gama's Portuguese sailors fled from the hospitable Hottentots at False Bay to these present days, when foolish men have called the native talking jabbering, their courtesy impudence, their gods demons, or have trembled and fled before their playful but excited mimicry, and, calling it dangerous threatening, have drawn fire-arms or summoned English regiments.

CHAPTER II

THE NGONI

THE story of the Ngoni is a modern reproduction of what happened in Europe in the days of the Roman Empire, and of what was happening all over Africa during the past three centuries. It explains many a linguistic and racial riddle. And as probably no great raid in the prehistoric times of Africa can be traced with as great accuracy, it would be well that every step of the progress of this restless tribe, and the influences left behind, should be minutely followed and recorded by some patient searcher. That task I shall not attempt in this chapter, but that some appreciation may be given of the people among whom we have been working, let me record this general sketch of their movements.

The first quarter of last century saw the uprising of organized warrior tribes south of the Zambesi. First among these was the Zulu nation, a people who were built out of numerous fragments by Chaka their chief, and for a few years carried on a series of conquering raids which were almost irresistible. Their progress set the tribal system of South Africa into motion. Clans were annihilated, others incorporated into the Zulu nation, others driven forth from their ancestral domains to wander far in search of security.

Ambitious generals broke away from Chaka, and formed new clans of banditti, who raided weaker tribes, fusing them into their own, or wiping them out. Thus, great tribes like the Bechuana moved on to new territory, famous warriors

like the Makololo, and the Mantiti arose, fought, flourished, and fizzled out. The history of almost all the great nations of Africa seems seldom to extend beyond the third generation. A mighty organizer and fighter arises, and carves out a kingdom for himself, and reigns for a few years, dying in debauchery and cruelty. The succession is disputed, and the strongest claimant fights his way to the throne, but at the cost of much blood, and the loss of large sections of tributaries. He proves himself far from equal to his father, and the oppressions and killings by which his father maintained his power must be increased, or authority will disappear. Then he dies, and the succession is again disputed, with the result that the unity of the tribe is destroyed. The new chief succeeds to a disintegrated people, and has no power to reorganize them, and his kingdom disappears before some new avalanche.

Out of the welter of South African revolutions, a small army of people called the Ngoni (which name might be translated "the foreigners") appeared on the banks of the Zambesi nearly eighty years ago. They were a heterogeneous company composed of gatherings from the Swazi, Mashona, Suto, Tonga, and many other tribes, led by Zongwendaba Jere. For several years they had been fighting and wandering south of Zambesi, and already had left behind them a section under Mungwara, a Karanga leader. One day when there was a total eclipse of the sun Zongwendaba's followers crossed the Zambesi near Zumbo and marched into the country of the Senga, a feeble people who were unable to resist them. So they took their land, and for six years remained there, incorporating many of that tribe into the regiments. They must have gathered a number of their medicine-men especially, for to-day nearly all the witch-doctors of the Ngoni are Senga.

In an appendix I have traced the general movement of this fighting horde, and the disruptions that took place,

until all the Central African regions from Victoria Nyanza to Lake Nyasa have to-day some remnants of this wild people who are known as Mazitu, Maviti, Mangwangwara, Ngoni, etc. For this general narrative it is sufficient to say that they fought their way north until they came within sight of Victoria Nyanza at Speke Gulf. Then they were driven back by famine, and internal dissensions, until the main body under the leadership of Mombera, arrived on that plateau lying to the west of Lake Nyasa, where they are to-day.

When they appeared in the Henga Valley sixty years ago, I do not suppose that they mustered two thousand fighting men, and these must have been an extraordinarily motley crowd. There were Suto from the far south, Sukuma from the neighbourhood of Victoria Nyanza, and pickings from nearly all the tribes they had fought in their march of two thousand miles during those twenty years. But they had two great advantages over every tribe they conquered. First, they had the Zulu stabbing-spear and great hide shield, whereas the Central African tribes had only their bows and arrows. And again they were a disciplined people under a central authority, while the local tribes had no power of combination. Many of the clans of Central Africa spoke a common language perhaps, but they were divided up among numerous chieftains, each jealous of the other. Nay, a process of disintegration was so effectually at work in some tribes, that families lived by themselves on their own garden patch, acknowledging no chief and no authority. Consequently, the Ngoni were not long in making themselves masters of the whole country. They built their villages in the hills, but sent out their *impis* every year to the Tonga by the Lake shore, the Chewa to the south, the Senga to the west, and the Henga to the north. These *impis* returned with tribute of ivory or cattle, or with a train of captives whom they had taken

alive from the Gehenna of villages and people they had left behind them. The captives were incorporated in the tribe, and the lobes of their ears bored after the manner of the Ngoni. The autochthones, such as the Tumbuka, Nyika, Henga, etc., became part of the tribe, and the young men were drilled for the regiments. Thus the northern Ngoni grew from a few thousand to more than a hundred and twenty thousand.

Although the proportion of men and women who had come from south of the Zambesi, or were their descendants, was very slight, the language used on all public occasions, and indeed generally in village life, was Chingoni, a slightly modified Zulu. It was this language the missionaries spoke, and in it all the education was conducted. In this the Ngoni enjoyed a peculiar advantage over all the Central African tribes when mission work was opened among them, for they found at once a literature prepared for them in the books of South Africa, and especially in the Zulu Bible. When we remember that not another tribe in all these regions has yet, after thirty years' mission work, got the entire Bible in its own language, we see how favoured was this people who at once received so great a gift in a tongue they could understand.

The tribal organization, too, took on the form to which the Ngoni masters were accustomed. There was the paramount chief Mombera, to whom the royal salutation "Bayete," was given. And he had his group of indunas. Each one of these indunas had his own villages, and a council of grown men to support him when he sat in the kraal to hear his village cases. The great indunas were saluted with the cry "Nkomo." They supported the paramount chief and assisted him when he held his judicial court. Under these great indunas were other lesser headmen in charge of smaller villages. Besides the great chief Mombera, there were three other chiefs, sons of Zongwendaba, who exer-

cised complete control over their own people, and sometimes were not very loyal to one another, or to the paramount chief. These were Mtwaro, with Ekwendeni as his head village; Maurau, with Elangeni as his head village; and Mperembe, with Emeisweni as his head village. These three chiefs had also a completely organized state under them, similar to that of the great chief; but their indunas had neither the same dignity, nor a special salutation.

Some of the headmen and petty chiefs gained a great place for themselves by their activity in raiding. Their villages and cattle increased so that their personal power seemed sometimes to threaten the authority of their chief.

The civil organisation of the tribe was a very orderly and efficient system, provided a strong and active chief controlled. But the control was certainly not one engendered by confidence in the justice or moral standard of the ruler. It was partly due to sheer terror of him, and partly to that clannish loyalty to the chief which is so deeply inbred in the African.

The lowest class of the tribe was the serfs. They were recent captives, and were the "children" of one of the warriors. He acted as father and master to them, calling them alike his "slaves" and his "children." They had to give him service, such as helping to build his house, to hoe his garden, etc., and he made what claim he pleased on their property. The masters, on the other hand, had certain obligations towards their serfs. They built beside one another, and lived much as one family. The owner provided wives for them, but claimed the children born as his property, and when the vassal got into difficulties, the master defended his case, and paid what fines were imposed. The social construction, therefore, was as follows. Over the serfs were the masters. Over the whole village was the headman. He judged the petty cases and quarrels that arose in his village. Over a group of villages were the

indunas, who judged the appeals against the headmen, and quarrels between villages. Over the indunas were the chiefs to whom the final appeal was made, and all complicated cases brought. But in the council of the chief the indunas sat not as assessors but judges, with power enough to gainsay and overthrow the decision which the chief might pronounce, if it did not agree with their sense of right. The chief might be despotic enough, and terrorize his people into a dumb submission, but often the indunas defied his ruling and compelled him to take their view of matters. The civil indunas were men of great power, and were all emigrants from south of the Zambesi. But besides them there were appointed to lead out the *impis* many war indunas, some of whom were originally slaves, and belonged to the local Nyasa tribes. Of such was Ng'onomo, who though he had no voice in council, was often appointed general of the entire fighting force. And when he led, the great civil indunas who went forth with their regiments were under his authority.

At the time of their coming among the Henga and Tumbuka, the war organization of the Ngoni was still pretty rigid. The young men were gathered together in villages by themselves, and compelled to abstain from many of the pleasures of life. They were allowed neither to marry nor to drink beer, and were continually drilled in military exercises. But this strict discipline soon began to disappear. The wars, with the Lake people especially, thinned their ranks, and, at the same time, thousands of the more effeminate local people were being incorporated in the nation. Consequently, though for many years the Ngoni insisted on their own language being spoken, scorning the tongues of Central Africa, and though up to this day they still retain, in general, their old civil organization, they were gradually submerged by the new elements which they introduced. The rigid social morality became weakened

by the lower tone of the local tribes, and the slave mothers could never learn dignified Chingoni, but spoke their own vernacular to their children. Dances, beer, indiscriminate mixing of the sexes, looser family ties, rebelliousness to authority, were all insidiously softening the character of the people. And the regiments, composed almost entirely now of men of the surrounding tribes and no longer segregated or strictly drilled, ceased to present the old muscular and defiant appearance. Livingstone laughed at the wretched mimicry of the South African *impi*, when he saw these Nyasaland people under the headdress of cock feathers, and carrying Chaka's spear and shield.

CHAPTER III

THE METHOD OF WARFARE

EVERY year about harvest time a great national raid was made by the combined regiments of the tribe, and this was the method of their going forth.

The indunas of Ekwendeni village perhaps, hold a council and decide that an attaek shall be made on a certain tribe. When they have agreed on this they send messengers to Elangeni, the head village of another great chief, and ask if they will join in the contemplated campaign. Their willingness signified, they all go in a body to Eehigodhlweni, the royal village of the tribe, to meet with the indunas of the paramount chief, tell them of their design, and ask for their eo-operation. After some talk a compaet is made that a national expedition shall be undertaken.

Some days after the war-herald of the great chief is dispatched secretly in the evening to Elangeni village, and at dawn, before the people have come forth from their huts, he suddenly appears standing on the great ant-hill in the centre of the cattle kraal. He carries in his left hand his shield and assegai, and in his right he holds aloft a knob-kerry. Before any villager has become aware of his presenee, he cries aloud with a long-drawn shout, resting on the last syllable:

"Mu yezwa na?" (Are you hearing?)

Immediately all sounds of sleepy talk cease within the huts that lie around, and a great silenee falls upon the village. After a pause the herald again cries aloud, "Thus

he saith. Let the meal be ground. To-morrow the chief goes forth."

And when the message is given, he drops down from the ant-hill and hurries off into the bush before anyone has seen him, making his way back to the paramount chief.

The village is soon astir with bustle and excitement, for all know that these simple words mean that preparations must at once begin for a great national raid. Messengers are dispatched to all the other sub-chiefs and head men, telling them of the summons to war, and for the next week the women are busy all day pounding maize meal for the journey, while men see to their armaments and war dress.

Six or seven days after his first appearing, when the dawn is breaking on the eastern hills, the village is again startled into a great silence by the shout of the war-herald on the ant-hill. And this time he cries:

"Mu yezwa na? To-morrow let the snuff be ground, for on the following day he goes forth."

Then the preparations are completed, and on the third day the village regiments start out, going only about two miles, and erecting there their sleeping sheds.

The village that had suggested the expedition leads the way, making for an appointed rendezvous, and there they wait until all the regiments of the tribe have assembled. When all is ready they start forth in long parallel ribbons of Indian file, which stretch out with a front perhaps a mile broad. In the centre of the army the boys and girls march, carrying on their heads goat-skins crammed with meal, and grain for the brewing of beer for the chiefs. They march at first for fifteen or twenty miles a day, until they come within two or three days' journey of the stockaded villages that are to be attacked. Then their approach becomes very cautious, scouts being chosen who go ahead of the army for four miles or so. When they see that all is

clear, they sit down to wait the coming of the main body, and thus they advance all day by short stages.

At last the villages appear in the near distance, and all secrecy of approach is abandoned. The men of war muster on rising ground within full sight of the doomed dwellings, and there display their full strength to the terrified victims. Booths are thrown up extending for eight or ten miles, where the warriors and their servants may sleep.

For a fortnight the regiments quietly wait, while the villagers gather all their possessions within the stockade, and prepare themselves for the defence of their lives and property. At last the enforced idleness can no longer be borne, and the indunas gather to the general in command and demand that he order an assault. But he only replies that they return to their quarters for two days more, and then meet him again. When the stipulated time is up, the regimental indunas again assemble before the general and urge an instant attack. And that evening the war-herald is sent out to all the booths, and shouts to the eager warriors that they must prove themselves to be men, and sharpen their spears, for in the morning the onslaught will be made.

Next day the regiments are all drawn up in a great circle, and the general stands forth in the midst and details the order of advance. The "Chikwichi" regiment is to open the attack. Then the "Izinkabi" are to follow, and then the "Mahamba," and so on. But none are to engage in combat until the premier regiment, the "Chikwichi," has climbed the stockade or been broken. The "Chikwichi" are now dancing in wild impatience. They have a great reputation to maintain, and they seize their reed pipes, and having blown a great blast with them, rush forward with shrill whistles and defiant shouts.

The miserable villages meet their assault with a cloud of arrows, which do little damage to the warriors behind their

great shields, but when a volley from old tower-guns blazes forth from close quarters many a hot-blooded young man is stretched on the ground. The attack now waxes furious, and the general, who stands on an ant-hill near directing the operations, sees that the ranks of the best regiment are being thinned, and orders the "Chikwichi" to return, sending in immediately the "Izinkabi." By and by the people within the stockade are showing signs of weakness. Their guns cannot be reloaded quickly, and their arrows are ineffective. The general sees that the men are wavering, and the women preparing for flight, so he lifts up his voice and shouts: "The stockade is broken," and with a roar the whole army dashes forward to the palisade. The warriors are soon swarming over it, and the villagers, terror-stricken, are fleeing hither and thither for safety in the cage within which they have closed themselves. The young Ngoni bloods rush about slaying with their short sharp spears; they have no need for taking slaves alive, for they have no households requiring service. But the married warriors are keener on captives than on blood, and they seize as many children and able-bodied women as they can rescue alive.

The property of the captured village goes to the first claimant. One warrior rushes up to the gate of the cattle kraal, and shouting "I am first," takes his stand there, to defend his right to the rich booty within. Another follows, and cries, "I am second," and he takes his stand with the first, and proves his right to share with him. But there is no third. In a few minutes every living thing and all the property are in the hands of claimants, and the village has changed masters.

The army now settles down in the captured village, and refreshes itself with the spoils of food that have been seized, and the girls busy themselves preparing meal for the return journey. On the day after the assault the attacking

regiment is summoned before the general to give an account of the action. They describe how so and so was slain outside the stockade, and how his body was rescued and carried out of the zone of danger. And then they name the warrior who had first been successful in mounting the palisade, and tell how he had dipped his spear in the blood of some victim, and he is then publicly proclaimed as " Master of the Stockade."

During the week or two that the army is resting, companies patrol the village all night in watches of four or five hours. And during the day the premier regiment of the villages that summoned the expedition scours the neighbourhood in search of further booty.

At last the journey home is begun. The order of the march is reversed, and the warriors who led the van in the journey out now take up their position in the rear. Scouts are sent ahead, and the long march back is performed in all haste, for food soon gives out, and hunger is driving the warriors back with as little delay as possible.

When the *impi* is within two or three days of home, three men are selected representing each of the head villages, and are sent on ahead to give the chief the news of the expedition. They travel by night only, and during the day they hide in the scrub that no one may see them. At length they arrive at Echigodhlweni in the dead of night, go quietly to the hut where the head induna is sleeping, tell him how they have conquered, and name the warriors who have been slain in the fight. The induna then leads them to the chief's house, and rousing him from sleep gives him the same news. And when the whole story has been told, the chief accounts for any deaths that have happened in the village during the absence of the expedition. Then the messengers leave secretly, speaking with no other in the village, and make their way back to the *impi*.

A Young Ngoni Warrior

He is wearing the *ijaha's* (lad's) headdress of cock feathers, with a skullcap of small beads. His shield and spear are somewhat degenerate specimens.

A day or two later the victorious army approaches the royal village, and when they are within a mile or so they sit down by the banks of a stream to cook and eat. Those who have slain a human being smear their body and arms with white clay, but those who were not the first to dip their spears in the blood of the victims, but had merely assisted in the slaying, whiten their right arms only. At the stream they rest for one day, and on the following morning the regiments are all drawn up in order, and advance to the royal village, each one singing its own war-song, and so enter the enormous open cattle kraal where the chief and his people are awaiting them.

When all are gathered inside, the general stands forth and tells the chief who were killed in the first assault, and names the young blood who first climbed the stockade and slew a villager within. This hero now advances dancing. He holds in his hand the bow or gun of the man he killed, or if his victim was a woman he carries her pounding stick. And Mombera acknowledges him as the hero of the fight, and orders his men to give him a bullock as a signal token of his princely admiration.

When all the dancing is over, announcement of the deaths is made, and public weeping for the slain begins. But all through the long ceremony parents have been quietly glancing through the regiments, seeking for the shields of their sons, and some who could not see there the familiar marks of their children's arms, have been sitting with heavy hearts, but not daring to express their emotions.

The warriors who have slain others sleep that night in the open kraal with the cattle, and do not venture near their own homes. In the early morning they run again to the stream, shouting the alarm cries of their enemies, and wash off the white clay with which they have bedaubed themselves. The witch-doctor is there to give them some magic medicine to drink, and to smear their bodies with a fresh

coating of clay. For six days the process is repeated, until their purification is completed. Their trappings and war dress are hung up on a tree, the head is shaved, and, being pronounced clean, they are at length allowed to return to their own homes.

CHAPTER IV

INTRODUCTION TO CHIEFS

WHEN I arrived in the country the national raids had ceased, though smaller independent expeditions were still dispatched, but with some secrecy. Many things had contributed to this comparative pacification. One was a fearful defeat that the *impis* had received at the Lake, whither they had gone in pursuit of some fugitives. Many of the surrounding peoples, also, had been growing confident through the presence of Europeans in their midst, and one white man was a greater deterrent to pillage than an army of natives. There had also been some communications from the Protectorate Government which were convincing the Ngoni that they were no longer masters of the situation. But above all, the schools and the preaching of the Gospel were creating a new conscience among the people, and it was common knowledge that their life of pillage and murder was contrary to the law of God.

Mombera, and Mtwaro, his brother, were both dead, and with them had disappeared much of the centralized authority, and power of combination.

For ten or twelve years European missionaries had been settled in the tribe, chiefly at Njuyu. Their position there had frequently been one of extreme danger, and their colleagues at the Lake shore had passed through periods of great anxiety for them, when communication was entirely cut off with the hills, and the councillors were threatening to

drive all white men out of the country. But gradually opposition began to die off: permission was given to open schools at various centres, and the daily teaching in these was breaking the war spirit of the tribe.

In 1896 there were already twenty-one schools established, and taught by natives of the country. The first two converts who had been baptized in 1890, after eight years of patient service, had increased to sixty-one, and there was a considerable catechumenate. The European station at Njuyu had been shifted to Ekwendeni, and another had been opened at Hora and occupied for three years, although now no missionary was resident there. The chiefs no longer objected to the missionaries travelling and preaching among the villages, and they had come to recognize them as the representatives of the European power which was extending all around them. Consequently the tribe was now ready for considerable extension movements. When Dr. Elmslie left on furlough in the spring of 1897, he had seen the people passing from the stage of suspicion and distrust, and the little church emerging into a conscious and active life. But so far only a few of the centres of population had been occupied, and some of the most important leaders of the nation had deliberately closed themselves against mission influence, and we felt it impossible to rest content within a limited sphere if villages beyond could be induced to receive our message.

The house at Ekwendeni had one great advantage for a missionary: it looked out on a distant horizon. Day by day one saw the sun go down behind the western hills, and when the evening glow came over the sky, one seemed to feel the world beyond calling. There were villages on the other side of that barrier; what of the people? There were plains and rivers. What of the land? And the mystery of the horizon kept beckoning us to cross and explore beyond. When once one has been gripped by the voices of the horizon, it is

impossible to sit still, contented to cultivate, and recultivate, with every new fertilizer, the little garden patch where one's house is built.

So when Mr. Stuart arranged that we should pay a visit to Mperembe, his plans fell in entirely with my likings. This chief was a brother of Mombera (as I have already explained). He still clung to the war traditions of the tribe, and was not considered to be very friendly towards the mission. To ensure a favourable reception we called in the help of his younger brother Maurau, a powerful chief in whose head village we had a flourishing school, and we were soon assured that we would be welcomed. So we proceeded to prepare for an extended tour to visit him and some of the other important chiefs who had not yet given us permission to open schools in their villages.

Touring in these regions requires a little foresight, and more arrangements than the packing of a portmanteau. We must take a tent with us, for living in native huts is not attractive, and, as we know now, is dangerous to life, for every hut soon becomes infected with a house tick, the tampan, whose bite produces a high persistent fever. We must take our food with us, for it is hard to be satisfied and to sustain one's strength on native diet. There is no wisdom in "pigging it," especially if a great part of the year has to be spent touring; indeed, it is thoroughly demoralizing to "pig it." So we have our camp table and bed, and bath, our pots and pans, all of which add to our baggage, but make bush life less exhausting to the European.

In these lands all goods had to be carried by men, for there were no draught-oxen and no riding beasts. So we had to take with us a goodly company of at least a score of able-bodied men. If we encumbered them somewhat with our necessaries of civilization, they required little for them-

selves, carrying nothing but a club and spear, and clad in nothing but a couple of yards of calico, and possibly not even wearing that if they found that two yards folded made a nice pad for their load. For sleeping accommodation they would depend on the village huts, for food on the hospitality of the people we visited, for a bath on the river when there was one, and for warm bedclothes on the tight-packing of the naked sleepers, and the fire ablaze at their feet.

When all was ready we started out for Mperembe's one morning early, and making a detour, marched over broken country, cut by dry ravines, and over bare stony hills, until on the forenoon of the second day we arrived at our destination.

According to native courtesy we sat down near the gate of the cattle kraal, and waited there, without entering the village. No person was about, and no one appeared to welcome us. That was a good sign, for the longer the wait the greater the welcome. Too hurried a greeting might mean that the visitor must go quickly.

At length a band of young men came strolling round the village. They marched in single file and were very lightly dressed, but conspicuously decorated. The clothes of most of them consisted of two little skins hanging at their loins. They had also beads about their necks, brass bracelets, and anklets of wild banana seed which rattled slightly as they walked; others had anklets of little bells, which tinkled musically with each step. Each lad carried one or two knob-kerries; and as the long file passed us they looked as charming a picture of the pride of life as one could desire. Their bodies—muscular, erect, and clean—were carried with a jaunty grace and laughing defiance.

Their steps were so springy that they seemed only to touch the ground with their toes. It was the young men's pace, and as they all knew they were on show before us, they played their part to perfection.

After they had seated themselves on the ground at some distance off, there was another long interval of silence. Then we saw a procession of men winding towards us through the village huts. They passed us with a great solemnity, taking no notice of us. Nearly all wore the Zulu head-ring, and had attained to full manhood. Some were ancient and tottering, But each carried a large shield and a club and assegai. Some had their head-ring ornamented with a bunch of feathers, or with the crest of the golden-crested crane, and there was a little more calico among them than among the young men, and an air of staid responsibility instead of careless buoyancy. They also passed on, and seated themselves silently about the gate of the cattle kraal.

Then a little procession of the councillors came along—grave men, each with head-ring, and carrying spear and shield. Taking no notice of us, they seated themselves beside the men. Now it was becoming embarrassing. We two Europeans were sitting on our loads, with our carriers squatting near us. Opposite us the men had been gathering in silence, and we could see the women in groups on the ground about the huts. But no one had a word for us, and salutations must come from the hosts first, the stranger only answering him.

At length we heard a shouting in the village of "Ete, Baba," Mperembe's salutation, and looking up we saw the chief coming along to us, making jocular remarks to the women as he passed them. He was a tall, bloated, very ugly and very aristocratic looking African. He wore the head-ring, but had no ornaments, and no dress but a small worn bit of blue calico. He carried nothing in his hand but a fly-flick made of a bullock's tail. Yet there was an indescribable dignity about him that proclaimed him autocrat at once. He passed by his men with a leisurely stride, they shouting "Ete, Baba," and squatted on his haunches before

us. For some time he stared at us, as he might at an animal in his kraal, and then he said in a raucous growl, "Ngikubona" (I see you). "Yebo" (yes), we replied. For a moment longer he sat, and then slowly rising to his feet, while his people shouted "Ete, Baba," he returned to the village.

The salutation was over, and apparently the chief was friendly, for now the men and lads began to come to us and say solemnly, "We see you," though the humour of the greeting was over evident to us Europeans at whom they had been staring in silence for half an hour.

Now that these preliminaries were over we felt free to enter the village, and sent a message to the chief asking for a site on which to pitch our tent. His head induna came to show us a suitable place just outside the village, and then returned again while we were getting our tents erected, to say that Mperembe wished to give us "a little fowl," that we might eat and not be hungry in his village. We followed the induna to the cattle kraal, and there he indicated a goodly bullock as his "little fowl." We all thereupon shouted the formal thanks, and directed one of the carriers to kill the beast. This was soon done, for he walked up to the bullock and struck it to its heart with his spear. Immediately all the people within the kraal and outside sat down, lest, as they say, while the bullock stood stupefied before it dropped, any of its blood should be spilt.

The men were soon engaged in flaying and dividing the carcase, and we could hear Mperembe from his place in the village shouting to them that he wanted the skin and the tail, and certain tit-bits of the beast he had presented to us. These were given him, together with a fore-leg and shoulder, which by courtesy should be returned to your host.

In the afternoon we paid our return call to the chief, and brought with us a present of some cloths and beads, a

knife and other trinkets. We found him seated on a hard cow's skin which was laid on the ground, with a calabash of beer before him. Some wives and head-men were about him, getting a share of his beer. By this time he was drunk, the daily regal condition in this land. When you have serious business to do with a chief, rise early and get it done in the morning, for by midday he will be fuddled.

We handed over our present, which was much criticized and disparaged before our faces, and immediately distributed. But first the knife was returned to us. "For," said Mperembe, "there is no war between us, only peace." As he handed out his gifts to the men and women around him, one warrior, who was at once his executioner and bard, began to shout his praises in fulsome language, telling of supernatural deeds done in war and travel by the great Mperembe. But we were still sitting there, after having stated our desire to open a school among his people, when the bard's chatter was interrupted and he was sent forth to do his gruesome work as an executioner. A wife of the chief had that day been found guilty of adultery, and while we sat urging the cause of the schools, she and the guilty man were clubbed to death outside the village.

Next morning, after some considerable debate, we had the satisfaction of hearing that Mperembe would be willing to let us open a school on the following year, but he urged that a European should come to live among his people, and not simply native teachers. When we went to thank him for his permission, Mr. Stuart used his opportunity to plead for the life of another wife of the chief who had been found guilty of adultery, and succeeded in getting the death sentence changed to a fine.

From Mperembe's we started out to visit the new paramount chief Mbalekelwa. He had but recently been formally instated in his chieftainship, though five years

had elapsed since the death of Mombera. Here we had a repetition of the dispute that is apt to arise all over Africa on the death of a chief, leading possibly to the disruption of a great tribal unity. African chiefs are eminently polygamists, and their wives may be numbered by many scores. The chief wife is usually well defined. She is not the first wife taken, for the first wife is possibly a slave, but she is the first wife for whom large dowry has been paid, a free woman of good family. In almost all Central African tribes the law of succession is through the nephew, that is, the son of a sister. The Ngoni, however, retained their southern customs, and the heir was usually a son of the chief. But dissension is apt to arise as to which son is the rightful heir. A claim might be made for the eldest son born, especially if he had the advantage of years and by his activity had already assumed a place of importance in the tribe before his father died. When the chief wife had no sons, she might adopt the son of another wife as her own, or the chief might indicate which son he wished to be acknowledged as his heir. Owing to this lack of clear definition, several claimants might arise, and the successor that was nominated by the chief might not be acknowledged by the indunas.

Now this is what happened at the death of Mombera. His head wife had no son, and he had named as his successor a youth Mkuzo, whose mother was a slave woman, and to him the insignia of heirship had been given. But on Mombera's death the people of his head village refused to accept Mkuzo as heir, because, said they, "We do not know his mother." So, at the funeral, the chief's spear was handed to Mperembe instead of to Mkuzo, and with him lay the power of nominating a successor. Years passed and no successor was appointed, Mperembe declaring he was unable to select the true heir.

At last, after some pressure from us, as the civil affairs

of the tribe were getting into much disorder, the indunas called a great meeting of the tribe, and Mperembe was told to name the heir. He publicly professed his inability, and asked the advice of the head indunas. They decided on Mbalekelwa, the eldest surviving son of a head wife of Mombera. But, unfortunately, this wife had been driven away by Mombera for adultery, and the parentage of her son is by no means sure. The spear, however, was handed to Mbelekelwa, and he was acclaimed chief by the men.

But his appointment has never been fully recognized. No indunas have been given him, and many of the people hold that Mkuzo, who had been nominated by Mombera, ought to be chief. Although his position was yet without much authority, we felt that it was a matter of strategic importance that a school should be opened at his village, especially as some of the old warriors were bringing pressure to bear on him to confirm his position by calling out a great raid.

So we left Mperembe behind and marched for two days towards the paramount chief's head-quarters. On arriving there we found little of the dignity and ceremony established which should have surrounded one in his position. There were few old men about him, and almost none of the great Ngoni leaders, and he was still very shy and self-conscious. The royal salutation "Bayete" was shouted when he moved, or spoke, but the miserable appearance of the Tumbuka slaves who followed him, sponging on his vanity, made their attempt at ceremonial state rather farcical.

We found the young chief, Mbalekelwa, as he was then called, a rather attractive lad in those days, and we stayed in his village for a little time, and initiated him into the mysteries of the alphabet. He gladly gave his consent to the opening of a school, and he himself was an eager pupil

for a short time. But already he had become addicted to hemp-smoking and the regal habit of drunkenness, and I fear his good intentions for himself never got very far. Selfishness, which is a deplorable vice in a chief, and sensual indulgence have not helped him, and to-day his power is feebler than ever.

While we rested at his village we were pestered by the widows of Mombera, who gathered about us like flies, and more aggressive than all the others was the head wife, who had adopted Mkuzo as her son. She presented a miserable appearance, her face, from continual drunken bouts, recalling the battered and bloated visages one sometimes sees on wretched women in the city slums. She had lost an eye in a drunken fight with some man, and had the scar of a great wound on her cheek. Her face was most evil-looking from continuous drunken bouts.

With such a custodian of the late chief's good name one could not expect much character in the heir. But she made the most of her position, and along with the other widows hung about us for hours at a time, begging. When we remonstrated that we were the strangers, and hospitality should be given to us, they replied that they honoured us by begging, for thus they acknowledged that we were greater and richer than they. They begged our salt, our soap, our blankets, our clothes, and even our tent itself. Hour after hour we bore with them. They were the last to leave us at night, and the first to arrive in the morning. And when they found us adamantine, they went away with no pleasant remarks about us.

It was with some relief that we left this nest of importunate beggars, and travelled towards Ng'onomo's villages. But we approached this goal with less hopefulness than we had done the others, for Ng'onomo had declared himself to be inimical to our schools. He was the son of a Tonga from the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay.

A curious story used to be told about the capture of his father. When the Ngoni *impi* rushed his village, they found all the men sitting on their haunches, absorbed in that draught-board game which is to be seen played from the Pyramids to the Cape. In these lands it is played with pebbles and little cups scooped in the sand, and two or three dozen men may be engaged at once. For hours on end the Tonga villagers had been glued to their game, until they were startled by the hideous yell of the *impi* dashing through their village, slaying. They attempted to rise and flee, but their intense devotion to the game in a constrained posture had cramped their legs, and not a man of them could stand or get away. And so they were surrounded helpless among their pebbles, and every man incorporated in the tribe.

The boy Ng'onomo had been brought up along with Mombera, and the two became deep and lifelong friends. When Ng'onomo grew up, and went out to war he proved himself a warrior braver and more successful than most, and for this he was rewarded by Mombera with wives, slaves, and cattle. Thus he gradually accumulated a following, and soon was able to muster his own band of warriors. His energies were boundless, and his villages began to increase with the number of the captives of his spear, as well as with those who were drawn to him by the fame of his successes. Of course, his growing power excited the jealousy of the chiefs and indunas, for, after all, Ng'onomo was only a slave.

One year a great conspiracy was formed to kill him, and distribute his wealth. The conspirators got the ear of Mombera, and poured in tales of treachery and disloyalty, until Mombera agreed that Ng'onomo must die. Thereupon a great collection of regiments was summoned, and camped about the royal kraal, and a friendly message was sent from

the chief to Ng'onomo, asking him to pay him a visit as his heart was hungry to see him. When the message came, Ng'onomo at once rose to go to see his old friend. But, meanwhile, news of the conspiracy had got about, and all the friends of the great fighter began to flock about him, forbidding him to accept the treacherous invitation. He would not listen to them. Then they declared they would go and defend his life. But he laughed at their fears, and bade them stay at home.

So he went forth alone, and as he passed near the royal village he could see the army of his enemies camped in the valley below. The cattle kraal, too, was crowded with all the great leaders of the tribe, and fighting men in the full panoply of war. But he passed within the fence undaunted, and marched up to Mombera, and began to dance one of his wild war-dances. Mombera eyed his coming over his beer pot, and when he saw the dance begin, burst out laughing, and taking Ng'onomo by the hand, made him sit down beside him, and talk, and immediately his heart was knit to him as of old.

But, although Ng'onomo escaped that time, his position in the tribe was never a safe one. Yet he grew in power and wealth, and when the rinderpest swept through the country emptying the kraals, and leaving entire districts without a cow, somehow it did not touch his corner, and while the grass grew in the cattle pens of other chiefs, his remained full of lowing kine. In 1895, he got into serious trouble through harbouring a rebel chief from the Chewa country who had fled before a punitive expedition of the British Government. And when the whole tribe was threatened with an armed force unless the fugitive was given up, once more the chiefs would gladly have done him hurt.

He had now moved away from his old district at Hora and was settled on the lower reaches of the Mzimba River,

in a country covered with trees, and with rich feeding-ground for his cattle. Several attempts had been made to induce him to receive our teachers, but without avail. Yet we decided to try again, especially as he was always kindly disposed to the white man. It was important not only from the point of view of the large population gathered about him, that we should get schools opened, but also from the knowledge that if once he yielded, few would feel inclined to hold out any longer against us, and the last influential leader of the war party would have succumbed before the new era of peace.

It would not be wise, however, for us to force ourselves on him, or to surprise him by an unexpected visit, so a message was sent ahead to tell him that we were on the path, and would be glad to talk with him in his own village.

On the night that we marched into his district we were late. The sun had gone down while we were yet stumbling along the tree-strewn path. Happily, the full moon had risen giving us good light, and at last we came to a little village. We called for some one to show us the direction we should take, but no one answered. The cattle-kraal was empty, and not a man, woman or child was to be found. Without a guide it was hard to pick out our path, but we could find no one to help us, and on we stumbled. Soon we came to another village, but found it also deserted. The head teacher, who was with us, thought he knew the direction of Ng'onomo's chief village, so we followed him until at last we came on a little collection of huts in the wood. But again there was no living person about, so we decided to pitch our tents there, and in the morning to try again to find our destination.

When the sun rose next morning we found that confidence had returned, and a few people were moving about the village. They told us that Ng'onomo was near at hand,

and a message had been sent to him to tell him that we had arrived.

While we were sitting in our tent at breakfast, the teacher came to the door, and said, "Ng'onomo has come." "Where is he?" we asked, and he told us to look outside. And there, right opposite to us, the old man was sitting. Two or three hundred fully armed men were squatting and standing around him, and others were still arriving. Yet we had heard no sound of their approach.

Ng'onomo now came to the tent and greeted us. We invited him inside, and gave him a seat. At first, he was evidently very suspicious. He did not know who we were, or why we had come, but gradually the purpose of our visit broke on him, and his reserve began to give way. Then Mr. Stuart asked him why he had come with such an array. "These are all your own friends come to greet you," he at once replied.

Then the usual presents were exchanged, and our carriers sat down to feast on the slain bullock, while we did our best to cultivate a little friendship with the old warrior and his people. We urged our desire to have a school opened. Some of the lads had the temerity to plead their eagerness to learn. But Ng'onomo would have nothing to do with schools. His great position had been won by the power of his spear, and he was not going to disperse it rashly by the teaching of peace in schools. So, after some little time had been spent at the village, we had to leave, with nothing accomplished.

Three or four years after, during a visit from Dr. Elmslie, permission was at last wrung out of him, but with the saving clause that none of his wives should be taught. He was a great polygamist, and knew that Christianity was opposed to a plurality of wives, and also to that state of drunkenness in which all good wives should try to retain their husbands.

But the pressure of the strong sons who were about him, and the lusty young men of the villages, who saw themselves being outstripped by the youth of rival districts, proved too great for him, and for their sakes he had yielded.

CHAPTER V

IN THE BUSH

I HAD now been thoroughly instructed in the ways of camp and caravan, and was ready to take my share in that continual touring which was necessary for the ever-widening ramifications of our work. The sphere allocated to our mission station included all the country of Mombera's Ngoni. At that time the people numbered perhaps one hundred and twenty thousand, and were spread over a district which measured about fifty miles by thirty. In these later years, they have widely scattered, and occupy a land three times as great, and the population has not increased much owing to the return of large numbers of slaves to their old lands. Mr. Stuart and I were the only Europeans in the land, when Dr. Elmslie was home on furlough, and when Mr. Stuart went to the Institution to help there, I was for some time quite alone.

The teachers who conducted our schools were at a very elementary stage of education, and required constant supervision. And great stretches of country were still unoccupied. Frequent travelling was necessary, therefore, and in this a great part of the year was spent by one or the other of us.

Our country is high, lying over four thousand feet above sea-level, and its atmosphere is still further tempered by cool breezes that blow throughout the dry season from a high range of grassy hills, called the Vipya. In the cold

season, from May to July, the temperature is so low that one wears tweeds, and is glad of a fire in the evening. Then tramping becomes a pleasant task, and when one has no fever hanging about one, longish marches of twenty to thirty miles can be made without strain.

Sometimes, in the exuberance of youth, I started out alone, especially if I was to be absent only for two or three days. Then I probably had a bicycle or a donkey to take me about. Strapping to my mount a blanket and a kettle with a little sugar and tea, I thought I was ready for the journey. But I always returned from these lonely efforts somewhat the worse for them. I had a great faculty for losing my way, and ending the day in difficulties, perhaps from punctured tyres, or from a lame donkey, or from blistered feet, and the food I got in the villages never seemed very sustaining. Yet it was worth a little inconvenience to see the beaming pleasure with which some old lady, whom I might commission to cook for me, fulfilled her task. She would bring me a dish of the whitest maize porridge, and add perhaps a cooked fowl as relish. But when she added, as a special dainty, a dish of fat stewed caterpillar, my inner man would revolt.

One night I arrived in a large village where a great "umsindo" was being held, i.e. the dance which celebrates the arrival of girls at puberty. In this case some daughters of a head man, and their companions of an equal age, were being honoured. The girls were shut up in a house by themselves, were decorated with beads, and were being instructed by the old women.

But outside a great company of youths and maidens were dancing. They were all elaborately decorated with beads, and bright-coloured cloths, and processed round and round the kraal as they danced, sometimes halting before the hut where the girls were seated, while they performed more elaborate movements of the dance. They had already

been dancing for two days and a night, and the festival was not nearly concluded.

Now, it was interesting to me to see this native custom, but, unfortunately, I had to pay rather dearly for the sight, for there was no food in the village but heady native beer, and I would not touch that. The good housewives had pounded no meal, and its preparation is not a matter of hours but of days. So however willing they might be to help me, they could not. But I had a good kettle of tea made, and a very tough fowl stewed, and managed to pull along fairly comfortably. All night through they thundered on with their dance, and the hut which was given me was constantly invaded by tired dancers, coming in to rest, and to see the white man. Next day I left them still absorbed in their exhausting sport, and cycled for home. I soon lost the path entirely, and found my way blocked by a high range of hills up which I had to carry my bicycle. When I got to the summit I could see Ekwendeni in the distance, and mounted for a somewhat hazardous run down. But I had not gone far before the tyres were punctured in many places, beyond my power of repair. To push that machine for twelve miles or so, over a pathless country and with an empty stomach, was almost more than I could manage. And when I got home, I thought it would be a long time before I made so foolhardy a journey again.

The donkey, like the bicycle, too, could be troublesome, but on the whole it was more reliable. Sometimes it got into a bog which threatened to swallow it, at other times it would refuse to cross some river. And in these situations one was very unhappy until natives arrived and rendered help.

But one advantage of these lonely journeys was the kindly relations that they established between the people and myself. In the evening they flocked into my hut, their tongues were loosened, and they asked questions, and

told stories far into the night. And the great disadvantage of coming into such close quarters with the natives in their huts was that one almost certainly got badly bitten by the *tampan*, and perhaps had violent fever a few days after. I had better say now, the disadvantage far outweighed the advantage, for as a dead missionary is not nearly so useful as a living one, my example had better not be followed too frequently.

The usual system of travelling was with carriers who were loaded with the tent and camp furniture, and also with a *machila*, or canvas hammock, slung on a bamboo pole, the lazy invention of the Portuguese, in which one was carried when tired. With these strapping young men one journeyed for weeks on end, listening to their conversation and songs, seeing them pouring with perspiration under their load and in a hot sun, and yet very, very seldom being disturbed with a quarrel among them. The good nature and the endurance of carriers are a constant cause for admiration.

Perhaps the lack of monotony in our journeys saved a vast deal of weariness and irritation. There is no more tiresome course than that of a wide unbending road which stretches straight ahead. And that is frequently the type of the new Government roads that are opening up the country. They are excellent for motor-bicycles, but detestable to the pedestrian. Happily, we seldom need to use them. The native path, on which I tramp hundreds of miles every year, winds and changes its prospect all day long. You pass round every fallen tree, turn away to the side to find the easiest crossing of each gully, twist about the edges of the gardens, puzzle over cross and diverging paths, and have never two minutes' monotony. Of course, it is not the shortest distance between two points. But there is something better in life than "getting there quickly," and we at least "travel hopefully."

What endless variety there is in the day's march! If one

is a botanist, or a zoologist, which I am not, one would never "get there." The path speaks too often, and too interestingly. Yet, even to the superficial traveller it is always arresting. You see the stones placed in the fork of some tree, or a bunch of grass tied into a knot, that tell you how some belated native passed this way, and placed there his talisman that the sun might not go down before he had arrived at his destination, and that the women might have porridge waiting him. At the cross-roads you see the cleanings of the pigeon-houses spread out, that the dove-cots may be fertile, or the shells of the ground nuts, that the gardens may be productive. Near the paths that diverge to some village you will see a heap of ashes, and broken pots, and sweepings that tell you how some wise witch-doctor has been purifying the village to drive away a persistent disease. Or your carriers will throw a branch or some stones on a heap that is daily increasing beside a village, to shame some barren household, lest their feet swell. You may pass a worn grinding-stone lying solitary in the tenantless wood, and it tells of inhabitants that were here a generation or two ago, and then will follow a wild discussion as to who these were, and what drove them forth, and so a page of history will be opened.

And then there is the constant interest and alarm of wild life. The honey-bird calls, and flutters from tree to tree, and your men seize their spears and whistle back to it, and off it flies leading them to some hollow tree where honey is hid. They take their spears, for they say that if the last traveller carried off all the honey and left none for the feathered guide, it will take its revenge on the next by leading him to a lion or leopard, and not to honey. And then they all have their stories of misadventures with lions to which they had been treacherously led, and they pour them out with energetic volume.

Snakes one is constantly seeing, and it is wonderful how

POUNDING MAIZE

Two girls are pounding with wooden pestles. A third, kneeling, is sifting the meal in a shallow basket. Maize is broken first, and then soaked for some days before being made into meal.

A NATIVE BRIDGE

It is built at a narrowing of the stream by laying sticks across convenient trees. No nails are used. All the binding is done with strips of bark.

little harm they do considering how numerous and deadly they are. I do not think that there are any that wilfully attack you first, unless you stand between them and their hole. Almost every case of snake-bite I have known has been got through treading on them in the dark. One day I was walking smartly through a wood accompanied by a host of children, who ran and leaped by my side. Suddenly they gave a cry and scattered. I looked up to see what was wrong, and before I could ask, a large snake about six feet long came slithering past. It got entangled with my feet as I stepped out, and twice or thrice I stumbled over it, before it got clear. But it seemed more eager to get off than to do me hurt. There is one snake, however, which is dangerous above all, for it is vicious and is said to attack unprovoked, and its bite is most deadly. It is called the "nkomi," and the male is said to crow like a cock, and to have a comb on its head. I have frequently met it, but none I saw had a comb. It is, perhaps, five or six feet long, of a light coffee colour, and not much thicker than a stout walking-stick. Once or twice when I have come across it in the wood, it has raised itself up about two feet, bent its vicious-looking head at us as if ready to strike, while the men have stood terrified. Then it has gone away a little distance, and again arched itself and fixed us with its horrid brown eyes, and so has disappeared into its hole. It is the only snake I have seen from which the men are so eager to get away, that they do not venture to throw their clubs at it.

When one marches with a number of carriers one does not see many wild beasts, for the noise of their talk warns all off the path. I have travelled for hundreds of miles along the Government roads with a European visitor, who was eager to see some of the wild life of Africa. But he was never away from his *machila* boys, and consequently did not get a glimpse of even the smallest antelope. But when

one goes ahead, especially in the early morning, spinning quietly on a bicycle, or tramping by oneself, one is sure to have adventures. I have cycled past leopards, hyenas, foxes, hunting-dogs, and numerous antelope, but always found them more ready to leap off before the wonder of civilized locomotion, than to investigate, or attack.

One day I was walking along a path which led through high grass standing eight or nine feet on either side, when suddenly I found myself face to face with a leopard. It was coming towards me, and when I unexpectedly appeared three or four yards off, it crouched ready to spring. I stood stock still, unable either to move forward, or to turn and run. And so we remained looking at one another, for a time that seemed to me much too long. At length it turned slowly round, and went off the way it came. I am afraid I cannot say that the power of my eye conquered it, at least, if my eye reflected my state of mind at the moment.

There is no more dangerous animal in Africa than the leopard. If it is wounded, it attacks with lightning suddenness, and every year numbers of natives and some Europeans get dreadfully mauled or killed by its deadly claws and teeth.

In the cool weather it is well not to set off early, for the natives feel the morning cold severely. Nor can the start be made till the sun is well up during the rains, for then the long grass is hanging with heavy dew, and before the traveller has gone many hundred yards he will be soaked through. If you must go early on these wet mornings, it is always wisest to march at the back of your caravan, for they knock off the dew by their passage in front of you. But though they have few garments to get soaked, they hate the cold wet, and you will probably find before you have gone a mile that you are in front of the caravan in spite of yourself, for all the way along one after another has been stepping aside on the pretence of tying his load a

little more carefully, or of taking a snuff, but really with the deep intention of falling into the rear and so walking more drily.

In the hot season, if you are wise, you will do most of your travelling in the night or very early morning. Even without a moon you can find your way along the path. And then you have the finest moments of the day, and of the year, when the dawn begins to break. You will hear the first cock-crow in the villages that lie around, but are invisible in the dark, and you will know it will not be long before the land you travel through becomes defined. Then comes the second cock-crow, and you are conscious of an almost imperceptible brightening. The trees are full of the singing of birds, a grey light is slowly revealing the outlines of the hills, then bright-red splashes outline the faint clouds, and the whole world bursts into life. How the men shout and sing in the joy of the morning. For hours they have been marching silently, doggedly, but now their bodies are quivering with energy. You pass near the kraal gate of a village where some men are sitting over a very little fire with sleepy, unwashed faces, and with their backs bared to the first rays of the sun. But the women are already vigorously pounding their maize, and boys are lifting the logs which close the kraal gate, that they may milk the cows into the wooden pails, before driving them out to pasture. And, unless thoroughly unwell, you will smile to yourself, and declare this is the best life that any man can live, and the morning atmosphere of Africa is more sparkling than champagne.

But, of course, you are not always travelling in the delicious morning. You must take the bitter with the sweet, and there are days when touring is a disagreeable enough duty. Especially is this so in the rains. You will now try to plan your work so that all travel is over before midday and you are safely in camp before the tropical

showers burst, for if you are caught in these downpours no waterproof yet invented will keep you dry. And it is not pleasant to find not only your clothes wringing wet, but the bedding also, and all your belongings. Sometimes you must pass over long stretches of country where there is no shelter, and then, alas! for yourself and your men if you are closed round by one of the long showers that last for hours on end. The natives suffer more from the rain than from cold or heat. Every year numbers are killed by it. Especially dangerous is it for the little herd-boys. Sometimes they are caught in a cold pelting shower far from the village, and before they can get to shelter they fall down chilled and die. The broad savannahs that we call the Vipya are a death-trap when the heavy rains come. One may be crossing them when the thick mists close down, driving in dense chilly masses. And the nearest tree-shelter may be an hour or two's journey ahead. I have once or twice entered these deadly vapours, and with the greatest difficulty, by dint of driving and encouraging and threatening, managed to get all my carriers through alive.

One year a Government official arrived at Ekwendeni after having passed through a severe trial on the Vipya. He did not know the dangers of those high lands, and allowed his men to be caught in a cold wetting rain, with the result that one carrier died, and another was brought in to the dispensary raving mad, his body covered with great blisters. Sometimes when men cross the Vipya they find the dead bodies of poor travellers who have fallen and died in the rain. The merciful traveller will be careful, then, to avoid pushing on when rain threatens, for although his warm clothes and strong mackintosh may protect him from chill, his carriers have nothing but their skin and thin calico to save them.

Lightning storms are sudden and more violent than those chilling rains, but they do not last so long. Their danger

is as great in the village as in the field. Every year there is a tale of victims who have been struck. A little while ago, one of our smartest boys was killed, along with four others, while they were sitting in a hut talking over the fire.

The natives have a curious and confirmed belief that lightning is a bird.

"Have you ever seen it?" I asked the night watchman.

"No, but a girl of our village saw it not long ago," he said. "And she surprised us by telling us it was quite a big bird. We always thought it was a small one. It was black, and had a big curling tail like a cock's. She was hoeing one day in the garden, when the bird splashed in a pool of water near her, ran up her hoe and scratched her, and flew back into the clouds. The lightning is the flash of its going, and the thunder the noise of its wings. And those little scarlet insects you see on the path during the rains, are the children of the lightning. If you don't believe me, I tell you I saw the marks of its claws on her body, and a man in the village has one of its feathers."

Of course, the coming of the rainy season brings new difficulties in travelling, and one of the most interesting of these comes from the swollen rivers. Sometimes you may find a convenient bridge over which you may cross somewhat gingerly, but with safety. When the river is narrow the bridge may consist of a tree on either bank which has been cut and allowed to fall so that the branches interlock. At other times you may find a very clever suspension bridge made by the knotting and twisting of lianas, which are tied to great trees on either side of the river.

Where the river is broad and very quiet we have a most primitive type of canoe to ferry us across. It is not even a hollowed tree, but simply the stripped bark of some giant of the forest. The sides and ends are turned up, while the bark is still fresh, and then sticks are stretched from side to side to keep the bark from rolling up and closing. It is a

very slow and somewhat uncanny method of crossing a river in which crocodiles or hippopotami may be lurking.

Most of our streams only run in the rainy season, and then they fill up suddenly with the great downpours, and come tearing along with alarming force. To get one's loads and oneself across these swift rivers is a long and exciting process. Sometimes, we may get two boys tied to a long rope, and while they struggle to cross the other carriers hold on to the other end, ready to pull them back, should they get carried off their feet. Then when they have succeeded in getting over, they tie the rope to a tree on the far side, and we pull it tight and tie it to a tree on our side, and then we go carefully across swimming or walking and holding on to the rope with one hand.

But you will not often use this method. The usual fording is made on a man's shoulders. Then you tremble for yourself all the way across, for your bearer may put his foot into a hole, and both he and you plunge headlong into the stream. Or you may find out in midstream that your bearer, who is already up to his shoulders in water, is walking on a submerged bridge consisting of a single tree, and is going so slowly because he is feeling with his foot where to place each step. Suppose he were to miss his foothold, what would happen ?

CHAPTER VI

IN A VILLAGE

IN the old days when we came to the village where we wished to camp, we would go to the gate of the cattle-kraal, and wait there for greetings, and then ask for a place where we might erect our tent. But now the villagers all know us, and we know them, so the men go straight on, and throw down their bundles in the cleanest place they can see. Then a site for the tent is selected, the women and children are called on to sweep the ground thoroughly, for few villages in their normal state are tidy. When the tent is pitched, and, if it is the rainy season, trenched, some of the girls go off with calabashes to fetch water for us, others to bring in firewood, and soon the cook-boy has his pots and kettles on the fire, a bath is ready in the tent, and the scores of unoccupied villagers, who have been watching every item in the operations, begin to disperse.

At first shyness subdues everyone, and there is an unusual quiet. The people sit about in some awe of the stranger who has come among them. Women stop their pounding and kneel beside their mortars, and children stop their play and scurry behind the huts if he happens to pass near. But if the visit is prolonged for two or three days, familiarity dispels the diffidence, and the ordinary stir of work and play reappears.

When one does not want to live in the midst of movement and dirt the camp should be pitched just outside, under the

trees on clean and grassy grounds and then no crowds will hang about the tent, and one's bed and food will not be powdered by the dust which the wind whirls about the houses all day. But at night the carriers must sleep near the tent, with fires at their feet, or there will be some risk of a beast of prey investigating the canvas interior.

Within the village there will be no lack of society through the day and evening, and at night the tent-doors may usually be left wide open for ventilation. But one can never be sure of a good rest if he is a light sleeper.

There may be music from some wakeful man who strums on his native harp a monotonous accompaniment to his song. At a distance these stringed instruments sometimes sound very sweet; they are never noisy, and a good *gubu* has a liquid tone that is most soothing. One's sleep, indeed, is often broken, in this land of endless variety, but not by fiendish motor-horns, or clanking carts. One may hear the howl of hyenas, and perhaps, if there is a good moon, three or four of them may be seen stealing through the village to a fowl or goat's house. Of all ridiculous night sounds there is none to equal that of the laughing hyena. I have heard it about my tent at night, and thought it was some drunk or mad man laughing aloud with senseless mirth.

One night my tent was pitched beside the cattle-kraal at the entrance to the village. In the early morning I was wakened by a crash near me, which was followed by the shouting of the people. A leopard had stolen past the tent, leapt over the kraal fence, seized a calf, and throwing it over its back had made off. Another evening I was startled by a horrid yell in a hut near me. When I ran out to see what was wrong, I found that my cook had been creeping out of the low door of his hut on his hands and knees, and was just about to straighten himself when he realized that he was face to face with a leopard. His yell was a perfect defence, for the leopard cleared off at once.

On another dark and moonless night I was awakened by the roar of lions in the distance. They were coming nearer and nearer the village, and I could hear the men stirring in their huts close at hand, and talking in low voices. Soon the lions were in the village and walking about the huts roaring together. One of the carriers began to shout to them. It was a long address, in which he assured them there were no people here, they must go elsewhere if they were looking for a meal, and so he continued with loud monotony. Meanwhile, I had lit a candle, and sat with a gun across my knees. I could hear the lions going round about the tent, so near that the crunching of dry leaves beneath their feet was quite audible. But I did not dare to fire, for there were huts on every side, and the night was pitch dark. I could only wait with a good deal of trepidation for a nose to be thrust in at the door. But after a little the lions seemed to take the talker's words to heart, for they left the village without doing any harm, and we could hear their roars decreasing as they went up the valley.

When they were evidently at a safe distance, a voice called from the near hut, " Please, sir, matches."

That was the explanation of the terror. The fire had gone out for it was a warm night, and the men missed their best protection.

Sometimes we have outbreaks of man-eating lions in certain districts, and then sleep is neither easy nor calm. I spent a fortnight in one of these places, hoping daily to get a shot at the brutes, but never succeeded in meeting them. Yet during that period three or four people were killed by them in various villages. They entered one village the night before I got there, and coming to the teacher's big square house, one of them had stood on his hind-legs and looked in at the little open window of the room where the teacher and his wife were sleeping. At

another village, while I was touring there, they had climbed on a roof, and torn the hut down. It fell on a woman and child who were asleep within, but the lions did not touch them.

One is sure to be told when lions are about, and then, of course, it is foolhardy to sleep outside the village, or to omit to see that a rifle is lying handy for any sudden emergency. But if there is no scare of wild beasts, the night is not likely to be disturbed by any more fearful sound than the lusty bleating of billy-goats or the crying of a child.

If you love to tarry in bed in the morning never camp in a village, for your conscience will give you no peace when all around are stirring, and you alone remain in bed. The sounds of wakening begin at earliest dawn. The cocks, of course, have been crowing with vigour, and scores of pigeons in the near dovecot have become very restless, until the little block of wood that filled their doorway has been removed by some early riser, and they have flown out with a loud whirr of wings.

By the time the sun is up the whole village is astir, and the hum and noise of village life rise on every side. Men are carrying on their noisy conversation. Women are pounding maize in the mortars. They have been at it since early dawn. Others are sitting under the eaves of their houses, talking and laughing in very audible fashion, and much of their gossip is not pleasant to morally delicate ears. Children are crying with marvellous lung-power. Pigeons are cooing most lustily, and constantly flying in great flocks, lighting for a moment and then rising again before some hungry dog that scavenges for a tit-bit. A mother hen is leading about a dozen chicks that run after her anxious clucking. Goats are stamping and fighting and bleating in the log goat-pen. Cattle are lowing in the neighbouring kraal for their calves. A man is snuffing, and is having a wild fit of coughing to show his polite appre-

ciation of the snuff his friend has handed him. Another is smoking hemp, and having stentorian and most distressing outbursts of a choking cough which ends off in a loud chant. In every hut conversation is going on, and with such a merry vigour and velocity that, had one inclination and power to listen, the details of the life of half a dozen families could be heard through the mud walls.

Yet through all this boom and surge of village life, one hears the twit-twit of several wagtails which flit about on the house-roofs, and break into a short, sweet whistle. And on the trees outside the village the turtle-doves are cooing an unending song to one another.

The village atmosphere can scarcely be called quiet, but the sounds are not harsh. There is no piercing rattle of iron wheels, and shod hoofs on noisy cobble-stones, no startling whistles of railway trains, or the hundred mechanical, rasping and nerve-destroying shrieks and clamours that proclaim an awakened town at home. There is a harmony and blending in nearly all you hear in this village, and when there comes a lull of crying children and coughing men, all the other sounds seem soothing and pleasant, especially if you are at peace with the world, and with the people round about you.

Now, sit with me at the tent-door and look at the people who pass before us in the village. You will have little difficulty in distinguishing the Ngoni head men. Those who have Swazi blood in them are peculiarly light in colour. Their skins are almost Indian red. The men of Karanga origin have Semitic-looking noses and are handsome big-boned fellows. All have great holes in their ear-lobes, for that is the Ngoni tribal mark, and some of the dressy men have ivory cylinders, almost an inch in diameter, thrust into the holes. These Ngoni are cleanly men, and love to decorate their persons. The head-ring has disappeared in the last half-dozen years, especially since the British Govern-

ment began to administer the land. It was the married warrior's crown. Now they love to bind bright-coloured bands about their foreheads, and decorate their hair with little bladders, or crests from the crane. On their wrists and ankles they wear rings of plaited brass wire finely drawn out, and ivory bracelets. On the upper part of their arm they wear a circlet of gall-bladder. Their one garment is usually a big cloth thrown gracefully round the body and over the shoulder, and they stride past us with a magnificent dignity, conscious that they are the rulers of the people.

The Tumbuka and Chewa slaves are quite another race. The young men are not distinguishable from the masters, but the older men and women who were captured in their youth bear the marks of their origin very prominently. The Chewa have lines cut on their faces, and the Tumbuka three big cicatrices on their foreheads. But all have their ears bored, too, after the Ngoni fashion. The double markings tell the tale of capture and incorporation in the tribe. Their children, who have been born in serfdom, have no mark but the Ngoni one. Some of the old men are hairy and fleshy, and their features are covered with a heavy growth of untrimmed beards. They are possibly all Chewa. The Ngoni pluck the hairs from their bodies, and shave their chins. But there are one or two dandies in the village whose moustaches and beards are rolled up in grass as in curling-pins. On state days these are unloosened, and combed out in long waving luxuriance. They are the up-to-date young bloods, who dress in white shirts and trousers. The raw Tumbuka, who is as he was a hundred years ago, has nothing on him that has been white for many a year, or will bear a washing now. His body always seems to be unbathed, his only ornaments are dingy, greasy beads, perhaps of old Arab or Biza origin, strung round his neck and, perhaps, the hairs of an elephant's tail used as a necklace, or as bracelets.

The faces of most of the slavemen and women who have passed middle age are intensely ugly. Deep coarse lines furrow their foreheads and cheeks, the marks of drunkenness, and lust, and neglect. Their front teeth were filed in their youth, but now are ugly yellow stumps, that seemed to be exposed with every word they utter. And their bodies are seldom straightened out in conscious dignity. As slaves they have learned to slouch and obey.

The young girls in the village are comely enough ; some of them, I should say, are beautiful. Their well-rounded, lithe bodies, are shown without immodesty, for their clothing is very scant, and, somehow a black skin seems sufficient dress in itself. Bright eyes and white teeth shine all day, and their feet are always itching for the dance. On festal days the Ngoni girls are gaily decorated with beads and the claws of lions and leopards tied about their heads, and hung on their necks. They usually wear a large brass collar made by many turns of wire, which looks like gold when polished, and their Tumbuka sisters hang strings of bright beads on to their shapely bodies.

But marriage comes soon, and motherhood, and hard-grinding labour from morning to night. And the bright eyes become dull, and the washed, anointed body becomes smudged with dirt, and loses its shapeliness. And so, at middle-age, they sink into listless, ugly, and dirty hags, whose tongues can be awful with venom and filth.

But of all the living things in this village there are none so attractive as the little boys and girls. They wear no clothing, and in the hot season sometimes wash their bodies and anoint them with castor-oil ; but in the cold they are coated with a fine layer of grey dirt which has been gathered from the village earth on which they sit and sprawl.

How their eyes sparkle with animation, and their teeth shine in constant laughter ! Their legs are always jumping into dance, and their whole day is one long game. When

the evening comes, and the hot sun is sinking below the horizon, every child in the village will be frisking about like the kids that butt them—racing, jumping, playing hide-and-seek, and dancing.

Before the sun has grown warm the village empties, and quiet again reigns. The little boys have gone off with the goats to pasture, and the bigger boys have led out the cattle. Most of the men and women have shouldered hoes or axes, and have gone off to the fields to prepare a new garden or to hoe for some villager who, with his wives, has set out before them bearing great gourds full of beer for their refreshment. About the kraal gate there remain two or three men sewing reed mats or making baskets, and behind the houses are industrious women pounding maize, or sifting the meal in their shallow baskets.

By midday, a great silence has fallen over all. The sun is blazing with a keen, unclouded heat. The trees are still, and the bare leaves have turned their edges to the blaze, unable to bear its fierceness. From the ground the hot air is rising with visible wavy shimmer. Within the huts some men are sleeping, others are lazily talking under the eaves, where women may also be seen lying on their faces asleep. Some pigeons are still active and run about the village dust, or soar noisily to their cotes, and an anxious mother hen still runs about with her little brood, picking up invisible morsels.

At last the late afternoon draws on, bringing a welcome coolness. The workers are returning from the gardens, some of them singing noisily under the influence of beer, Most of the women are carrying great loads of dry firewood on their heads, or little baskets of greens for relish, for on their way home they have not forgotten their domestic duties. Then the goats come home with a rush, little boys running behind them driving them with clubs, and catching the mother goats that they may tether them by

one leg to a stake before they are finally put into their pen.

Now, there rises a distant lowing, and trotting up the hill-side comes the herd of cattle calling for their calves that have played all day about the village dust. Some herd-boys are riding on the backs of the cows, and blowing hard on their pan pipes. Others are running alongside driving on the herd with whistling and the blows of clubs. And so the patient beasts crowd to the kraal gate, and struggle for precedence of entrance. On the great ant-hill, which stands in the centre of the kraal, the men are sitting, watching their cattle come in, and gloating over their most precious possessions.

When the night falls, and a clear moon is shining, the young people are almost sure to break into dance, if the stranger's presence does not restrain them. The moon decides how they spend their nights. When full moon rises they say, " It has drunk water," for it rises in the east from the water that encircles the earth. On the third night after they say, " It sends the children to sleep," for when it rises the little ones are fast asleep in their mothers' huts, and all play has ceased. On the fourth night they say, " It sends the old people to sleep," for they too have retired and are in deep sleep, and all the village is quiet before the moon appears. It is, therefore, only on the nights of the first quarters of the moon that the young people indulge in dancing, on other nights they sit over the fire and tell stories till bed-time. But, I have seen inveterate dancers sleep until ten or eleven, and then when the moon rose, they seemed to wake automatically and start their alfresco ball.

Now, some of the dances are very pretty, and healthy exercises, against which one can make no moral objection. Especially is this so with the kraal dances of the Ngoni, called the *ingoma*. But I do not think the same can be said of most of the Central African dances. There are not

many Europeans who have seen these village dances worked out to their climax. But I have frequently, especially in the earlier days, before our strong objection to them was universally known. And now the presence of a European in the village makes them ashamed to repeat all they do when they are alone, for they know it is foul.

One night, when a number of boys and girls were sitting about my tent, and I was talking with their elders, I said, "Run off, children, and play." "Shall we?" they cried. "Certainly, it is better than sitting here," I replied; and off they scampered. In a few minutes I heard the clapping of hands and singing, and at this signal for a dance the huts all over the village poured out their sleepers. After a time, I went along to see their romps, and found some hundreds gathered in a large ring, the males forming one half of the circle, and the females the other half. For an hour or two the dance went on very merrily and gracefully, girls performing by themselves, and then the boys by themselves. But as they warmed up to the fun of it all, the action became more and more obscene, urged on by the incitement of the old women, and the ribald laughter of the onlookers.

I turned aside to my tent ashamed for what I saw, and burning with a sense of the loathsomeness that had been let loose. Next morning I assembled the village, and spoke to them of the degradation of last night's performance. I blushed to speak of these things, while the old women and girls looked up, unashamed and wondering at my denunciation. But when I had finished, some of the elders spoke up, and cried: "You've said it. It's the truth, and there is never a night that these Tumbuka dances are performed, but the boys are incited to sin. They are scattering our villages."

CHAPTER VII

PIONEERING AMONG THE SENGA

IN 1897, Ngoniland was still surrounded by a wide belt of uninhabited land. To the east lies a stretch of about fifty miles of hill country which extends to the Lake. There the Tonga and Vipya and other tribes had lived before the Ngoni *impis* appeared, but all had been driven away, and the country was a vast wilderness covered with large trees, save on the wide savannahs where nothing but grass and bracken grew. The Tonga dwelt on a narrow belt of country close by the shore of the Lake, and among them we had a highly successful station at Bandawe.

The Henga Valley, once the residence of the Henga tribe, spreads out to the north for fifty miles, until it is closed in by high, steep hills, which lead to the almost uninhabited Nyika Plateau, six thousand feet above sea-level. This long stretch had no villages, and abounded with game.

Beyond the southern boundary of the tribe runs a wide undulating country, covered with trees, and gradually descending for nearly a thousand feet towards the Kasungu plain, on which a dense population of Chewa was gathered. But between the Chewa and Ngoni nearly eighty miles lay fallow without inhabitant. Before war had come into the land, this rich but rather waterless country was occupied by the Tumbuka and various clans of the Chewa tribe. Kasungu was still without missionary effort, though the British Government had recently established a fort there to protect the people.

To the west was a land of mystery. For sixty miles, where once the Tumbuka people lived, no village smoke could be seen, but beyond there was the great low-lying Loangwa Valley, in which the Senga had built their fortified villages.

With some representatives of the Senga we frequently came into contact, for numbers lived among the Ngoni, fugitives from their own people, or captives of war, and every year little plundering parties still went forth to the west, and brought back tribute of ivory. From some of our schools, also, the blue sharp peak of Parausenga Mountain, standing like a great signpost of their land, was visible rising over the flat horizon. And when one questioned the people about what lay there, they told of heat and thirst, of game and elephants, and of a poor harried tribe, living in terror of Wemba and Ngoni forays.

After much desiring, and some efforts, an opportunity came to me to cross the desert belt and visit the Marambo*, as the land in the Loangwa Valley is called. I was travelling along our western border, when I came to the village of one of Mombera's indunas. He was sitting over his beer, and was fairly far advanced in the stages of his daily intoxication. We talked together for some time, but the beer and a bad stammer with which his impetuosity afflicted him, made him almost incomprehensible. There was one recurring theme, however, which by much repetition soon became very distinct. He was demanding guns from me that he might follow some Senga slaves who had escaped to Marambo. Of course, I would not give them to him, and when I explained that I was eager to visit the Senga in their own country, he assured me it was impossible, for there was no one who knew the path. War had long ago closed up

* *Marambo* means flat forest land, and although *d* and *l* are interchangeable, *madambo* is clearly distinguished from *marambo*. Madambo are open wet lands.

NGONI WOMEN

The lady on the left is a chief's wife, the one on the right is a teacher's wife. The chief's wife has a band of lion and leopard claws on her head and neck, for these are the property of the chief. They both wear the large ivory ear ornaments.

SENGA WOMEN

Notice the tribal characteristics. The line of cicatrices on the forehead—the great "pelele" of ivory on the upper lip. The second woman on the right has also a wire nail dangling from her lower lip.

every line of communication. But during our conversation I learned that he had one or two elephant-hunters among his people who crossed over to Marambo every year. So I begged that he would give them to me as guides, and I would open up a road.

After much cavilling, he at last yielded to my urgency, and promised to send for the men, and we resolved to seize the opportunity and start out. I had with me provisions sufficient to last for three weeks, and all the necessaries for a journey. So next morning, after sending on a note to Mr. Stuart to tell him that I was making a bolt for the west, we started out with our guides. One has made the journey a dozen times since then, as have many other Europeans, and made it with little difficulty or wonder. But to be the first to cross over closed land, and open up an unknown tribe, has a spice of adventure with which no succeeding journey can ever again be seasoned. Our first two days out were sore travelling. There were no human paths, but we wound along game tracks, or crossed through woods whose short grass did not annoy the carriers' bare feet overmuch. Water was scarce, and could only be got at long intervals. All the time we were descending slowly, until we came to a series of stony hills which fall away to the Loangwa Valley. From the summit of them we enjoyed our first view of this great plain. It stretched to the north and to the south as far as the eye could reach. In the dim west it was closed in by the vast range of Mchinga Mountains, seventy miles and more from where we stood.

The plain was covered by trees, not a bare patch was visible anywhere, and it all seemed so flat that in the soft evening light it might have been a vast lake. At one or two distant spots we could see columns of smoke rising, which revealed the presence of inhabitants. But no village or garden could be discerned at any point.

For some hours we continued descending, tearing through

much thorny thicket, and painfully wading in the loose sand of dry river-beds. When evening fell we were out on the plain, but our guides declared that they had lost their way, though they had some idea of the general direction. This was painful news for the carriers, whose feet were sore with thorns and stones and burning sand, and they were ready to speak very sharply. But as the guides were timid of us, and we were entirely dependent on them, we tried to swallow our irritation, and told them to lead on to water where we might camp. The moon was late in rising, and it was no pleasant task to follow them in the dark through tangled grass and pathless thicket. At last we debouched on the wide sandy bed of a river. With a cry of relief the men ran down the banks, and flinging themselves on the sand began to scoop for water—but in vain. It was evident, however, that with a little patience we must be successful. So with a combined effort we cleared a large circle and began to dig vigorously with our hands. After going down for several feet, our efforts were rewarded, for we came to damp sand, and finally to fresh water. A little basin was dug out in which the water might collect, and soon we had enough to satisfy all our needs.

Here, then, we prepared to spend the night, but first had some questioning of our guides. As they declared that one of the Senga stockades was built near this river, and could not be far off, we asked them to follow the river-bed, until they came to the village, and warn the people that they were not to be afraid if they saw our fires at night. We were not an *impi*, but a party of friendly visitors. After the guides had been away some time, they returned saying that they had found no village, but had been met on the river-bed by two hyenas, and so had returned. One or two of the carriers seized their spears and volunteered to go back with them and have a thorough search. So they sped forth again, and we went on with the preparations for our evening meal.

When an hour or two had passed we heard the sound of voices, and, by the light of the moon, the guides were seen returning, accompanied by twoscore Senga, who came striding over the loose sand with the ease of men for whom those river-beds are the main roads. The village had been discovered, and the villagers had sallied forth to welcome the white man. After friendly greetings were exchanged, and the visitors had expressed their joy at our coming, we sent them home assuring them that we would pass through their village in the morning.

Next morning we were all ready to be off by sunrise, and impatient for our first sight of the Senga and their stockades. We had not gone far before we were met by numbers of people coming out to meet us, the women calling their shrill welcome, and the men clapping their hands and singing. We had come into Tembwe's country, and soon were passing through his first village. Here we did not stop for more than the few minutes necessary to receive several baskets of flour and a fowl, as a hospitable gift from the people. And then with a great procession of the villagers, old and young, we marched the remaining mile or two to the chief's stockade.

Presently we saw a vast bank of thorn trees before us, standing fifty or sixty feet high, and apparently impenetrable. But the path led us round by an opening in the thicket, and over a bank of ashes and refuse, the accumulation of years of sweepings. Rats innumerable scurried off into the dense weedy growth by the side as we passed along to the village gate. The palisade, without which we stood, stretched completely round the village in a huge circle. It was composed of tall thin trees fifteen feet long, firmly fixed in the ground, and bound by light twigs. The gate was a large slab of wood, eight feet by three, adzed to the thickness of two inches, and hung on pivots. Over the entrance, fixed on the tall stakes, human skulls were grinning.

We passed through the gate and found ourselves in a

village of about two hundred houses. These were packed so closely together that their eaves touched one another, and the path by which movement was possible wound in and out in an uncertain way which was only determined by the accident of sufficient space having been left between some houses. The huts were built of split bamboo laced about a circle of stakes, and mudded with a grey clay. They were very diminutive, many being not more than seven or eight feet in diameter. In the heart of the village stood huge grain bins, that towered above the palisade, and were entered from the top by means of ladders.

The place was appallingly dirty. The site consisted of sandy soil, that worked loose with the constant tread of human feet. All manner of refuse lay about in heaps, and nowhere more so than in the little open space where a few men were engaged at a native loom weaving their strong but coarse cotton cloths.

When we sat down before the chief's house, where there was a little more room for movement, the din of our welcome was deafening. But through it all there reigned so great timidity, that any sudden movement on my part would lead to the helter-skelter flight of all the women and children.

Tembwe was distinctly nervous, and allowed his more energetic son to make all the advances to friendship. He is rather an ignoble-looking African, much bent, and perpetually engaged in fingering his cloths, and seeing that the stump of his maimed right hand is entirely hidden under a fold. His conversation is very terse, and seldom consists of more than "Yes, yes, yes." But he is one of the most influential of the Senga chiefs, and has a fairly keen perception of what will be to his own advantage.

We remained two or three days in this village, most hospitably entertained with abundance of meal, and successfully disarming the fears of the people about us. But our nights were made miserable by the scurrying of innumerable

rats up and down the tent or over one's pillow and blankets. One day I spoke to Tembwe about the insanitary condition of his village, and remarked that owing to its dirt more children were dying within the stockade every year than the Ngoni *impis* had killed. He listened, and assented with his silly "Yes, yes, yes." But that night the message filtered through to his brain, or else his evening potations greatly inspired him, for sometime after midnight I was startled out of sleep by someone roaring in thunderous voice through the village. Up and down and round the stockade the voice shouted. It was Tembwe on a new crusade, and his words were, "Women all, rise and sweep! The white man says the children are dying because the village is not swept. Rise and sweep! Rise and sweep!" And when he had finished his heralding, a fox called in the thicket outside. Now the Senga say that when the fox calls at the village a death is near, and that night its warning sealed Tembwe's witness, and I could hear women in the huts all over the village pushing open their reed doors with a sleepy grumble, and going forth to their new task. When the morning came there was a choking dust in the air, and the first lesson of civilization had been learned, I had been the teacher, but it was Tembwe and the fox who had driven it home.

Leaving Tembwe's villages after listening to his urgent requests that he should have a school, and teachers, we marched south, and for the next few days passed each night within a stockade very similar to Tembwe's. Most days we were marching through a forest of tall *Mpani* trees. The land lies perfectly flat, slightly seamed where rivers have run in the wet season, and cracked where a pool of water has stood. The woods are free from undergrowth, and bush and rank grass, except just by the side of the Loangwa, or by some village site. Water is hard to find. What with a blazing sun overhead, from which the *Mpani* gives

no shade, for its leaves turn vertically when it is hot, and the long marches with no moisture for parched throats, a journey in Marambo can become very trying. But I have seen no land that grips the traveller like it. The great flat clean forest stretches out on all sides. For miles and miles we march seeing no sign of human habitation, but all the time the forest is alive with other creatures. Every few yards tiny squirrels leap before us, and running up a tall tree, watch us pass from some hollow in the trunk. Flocks of bright-coloured birds pirouette in the air by our side, every change of direction revealing a change of colour from red to blue and from blue to red. Scores and scores of wood pigeons rise in clouds from the ground to the trees. Herds of graceful mpala leap across the path and stand a hundred yards away gazing inquisitively.

Farther in among the trees large antelope, roan, eland, waterbuck are quietly feeding, and sometimes jackals, or hunting-dogs bark at us impertinently, until we throw stones at them. And all the way along troops and troops of baboons and monkeys swing down from trees and retire leisurely to a short distance from which they may watch us with a ridiculous solemnity.

And then we come to the Loangwa, in the hot season running over shallow sand, and safe enough now for a bathe and a long wade. The voracious crocodiles have gone to its lower reaches, or are in the deeper pools, and we can lie with safety in the shade in the delicious clear water, and get a new gift of life and strength from the flowing river, after days on the thirsty plain. But to see the mighty river in the months of flood is greater still. How its rushing brown waters used to call one, coming as they do from the far north through lands that were unknown, passing on through others full of mystery, and romance, and unlightened heathenism, until they fall into the Zambesi.

Some days of interesting wandering from village to village

brought us at last to Chikwa's. This was the largest of all the Marambo towns, and had about three hundred huts. But if Tembwe's place was filthy what may we call Chikwa's? The houses were more ancient-looking, the rubbish heaps larger, the thicket more impenetrable, and the smelling tangle of weeds that grew around more offensive, and more alive with rats and snakes.

Chikwa was a woman, she is dead now, sister to the last Chikwa, whose chieftainship she held until her son should be of age, for inheritance is by nephew, i.e. by sister's son. She was tributary to Ng'onomo, with whom she retained a precarious peace by annual gifts of ivory, but had built far out on the Loangwa Valley, in the depths of this dense thicket, that she might escape the harassments of the war-parties. The fact that we had come from Ngoniland was not at all to her liking, and she seemed overawed by us, and by no means pleased to see us. The days we spent in her chief village were not very cheerful. The heat was great, and we had no shade within the stockade. We could not pitch the tent outside for the undergrowth was rank and the vicinity insanitary and odoriferous, while man-eating lions were prowling about nightly. But we found a number of eager listeners who called for Peace from their perpetual wars, and for Light to disperse their darkness. And when we left, Chikwa, too, had agreed to receive teachers when we could send them.

The Senga are, physically, the feeblest race I know in Central Africa. Their land is hot and unhealthy, and child-marriage was common among them. From the west the Wemba raided them, and in many villages you may see the marks of the cruelty of those fierce fighters in handless wrists, and noses and ears sliced off. The Ngoni also passed over their lands almost every year. Hence they built their villages in strong pestiferous thickets, and almost every grown man seemed to be provided with an old "Tower" gun, or with a bow and arrow.

They are a composite tribe, partly of Tumbuka and partly of Biza origin. Early last century Biza incursions came down from the Mchinga Plateau, fleeing before the continual harassments of the Wemba warriors. They had been preceded, perhaps thirty years before, by small advance parties of fugitives under Pondo, who settled on the west bank of the Loangwa, and Chimwerampandi (the palm-wine drinker), who drove out the Tumbuka autochthones who were settled all over the plain. The first leader of the main invasion, which followed shortly after, was called Chikwa, and his successors each assumed his name at their coronation. After Chikwa came Tembwe, Kambombo and others who all acknowledged Chikwa's suzerainty. They found the plain occupied by the Tumbuka people who were thinly spread out from the Mchinga mountains to the plateau where the Ngoni now are. These Tumbuka were driven before them to the east, only one or two petty chiefs remaining.

Their language at first was Chibiza. But it is curious to notice in these regions how the language of the soil eventually prevails. Thus, Chingoni is rapidly disappearing before Chitumbuka, although fifteen or twenty years ago Chingoni was spoken throughout the Tumbuka country. So the Chibiza was soon lost, and to-day the language of the Senga is Chitumbuka, with a number of Chibiza words retained. I fancy the explanation of this is that the Biza invaders took Tumbuka wives, and as the children learn first the language of their mothers, the next generation lapsed back to what was the language of the soil.

Thirty or forty years after, a great number of Tumbuka returned to the Loangwa Valley and built villages there, having been driven back by an invasion of the Kamanga tribe from the north, who also were fugitives from the oppression of strangers. But these Tumbuka returned again to the hills when the Kamanga power was broken. In this way, the

Biza invaders have been surrounded by Tumbuka influences, and have been submerged by them. They call themselves Senga, that is, "the people of the sand," for the soil of the plain is very sandy. Their tribal markings are a semi-circle of minute cicatrices extending over the forehead from temple to temple, and met by radii from the eyes and the bridge of the nose.

The front teeth are filed to a sharp point, and the women wear huge ivory ornaments in their upper and lower lips, which stick out their mouths like a duck's bill.

From Chikwa's we turned our steps towards Ngoniland. The whole of the first morning's journey was made over a wide river-bed. There was only a trickle of water meandering through the field of sand, and at each step we took we seemed to sink three or four inches in the loose soil. Every mile or two we sat down utterly exhausted, with perspiration running down our bodies in streams. At last, in the early afternoon, we got to the foot-hills, and with firmer ground began to make a good pace. Up and down the stony hills we went, expecting to find water at every dip, and a suitable place for camping, but none appeared. The sun went down, and we were still pressing on in hopes of water. The fierce heat of the plain, and our arduous toil in the river-bed, had made our thirst greater than usual; but no means of quenching it could be found. It grew dark and the stars shone out, but still no signs of water. Then someone stumbled and dropped his axe, and was either too exhausted or disheartened to stoop and pick it up; then another axe fell, and now we saw we must halt and camp there for the night.

We lay about the fires, and went to sleep supperless, and with our mouths parched. I spent the night dreaming I was bathing in cold Scottish burns, and that I sat with open mouth under a waterfall, but every now and then I wakened up to the grim reality.

In the early morning we started off again, with great eagerness, but hungry and thirsty. We had not gone many miles when we saw the ground fall away to some pleasant green grass and shrubs, so off the men set at a run with the sure promise of water, and they were not disappointed. I was soon seated on the grass in the height of bliss, with a great pail before me full of cool clear water, and by my side smoke was rising from a fire on which the pots were already set, and the most delicious breakfast I had eaten for months was cooking.

The following day we were in Ngoniland, and among Ng'onomo's villages, drinking milk, eating mutton, and feeling that this surely was Paradise.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

THERE is an endless variety in mission work. Our days are not spent under palm trees expounding the Bible, but in a constant round of duties which touch the lives of the people on every side.

Industrial work has always had a large share of our time. In a land like this almost every necessary and comfort of life has to be made on the spot, and the making of these provides a vast amount of labour for the people, and teaches valuable lessons which help to form the citizens of a civilized community. We must have houses to live and work in, and miserable mud erections will neither preserve our health and spirits, nor raise the ambitions of the people. Besides, there is no form of dwelling more expensive than a temporary house which always needs rebuilding. If some critic says that other Europeans live in poor cheap erections, but we missionaries take care to make ourselves comfortable, I reply that we remain longer in the land, and do more cheerful work by having good housing, and are able to have wife and family about us, and that is invaluable for ourselves and our influence. Besides, every good house well built has been a long training in industry and honest workmanship for the natives who have erected it.

We never seem to be free from building and carpentry. New houses are always rising, and there is a constant demand for more house and school furniture. Roads and gardens must be made and all kinds of repairs are necessary, so we

have to learn to put our hands to many a trade, and to superintend many a gang of labourers. While these activities may minister to ourselves in great measure, they are proving all the time how much more remunerative labour is than raiding, they are creating new ambitions in the minds of the people, and increasing their intelligence.

Schools are necessary in Africa for evangelization. They prepare the minds of the people for the message we bring. I do not think any missionary finds that the Gospel breaks with the suddenness of a great flash on heathen darkness. Repetition is essential before the native becomes familiar enough with a truth to assimilate it.

A great clearing of superstitions, of mental lethargy, and of traditional prejudices must be made before we have a prepared soil for planting. And this pioneer work is one of the chief functions of the school.

Our whole educational system is still in an elementary condition ; the teachers whom we use are very imperfect pedagogues, and I do not think that the scholastic results of our huge number of schools are at all satisfactory. But the chief asset of our teachers is not their literary training, but their character. The chief result of the schools is the atmosphere which they create, and which is influencing the whole social life of the people. Thus, we have seen intelligence laugh away many an oppressive superstition, the spirit and custom of raiding entirely cease, a new era of industry awakening, and these are directly traceable to the work of our imperfect schools.

But I should have little satisfaction in seeing the war spirit declining before the spirit of peace, and more intelligence and comfort coming into the lives of the people, if these were not accompanied by a living faith in Jesus Christ, to give permanence and vigour to the new civilization. The African cannot progress apart from religion. His social morality is maintained by reverence for tribal bonds and

for the dim beliefs he has. If an advanced civilization comes which breaks these bonds and dispels this faith, though it may make him a richer and more industrious man, it will leave him a moral derelict on seas that are more than tempestuous, unless it give also the guiding and propelling power of faith in Christ.

I believe that there is no regenerative force in the world like the Love of God. When men come to know its shining, cruelty and lust give way to kindliness and purity, indolence to industry, ignorance to intelligence, and I hope that before the reader has laid aside this book, he will acknowledge that this fact has been demonstrated in Ngoniland.

With a deep conviction in our minds of the renewing power of the Gospel, we tried to surround our touring, and schools, and industries, with the atmosphere of our faith, that men might come to worship the incomparable Person whom we preached.

It was, therefore, with great thankfulness that we began to see a strong religious movement evidencing itself. One of the first signs was the increase in the Sunday congregations. The little brick school at Ekwendeni, which also served as church, was proving too small for the worshippers, many of whom sat without at the doors and windows, joining with us as they could. So we decided to erect a larger and temporary church. To do this we called for the voluntary labour of the people, which was readily given. The two local chiefs led out the men to the woods, and returned with trees, the widows of the late chief went forth with the women, and all day these stout, matronly persons could be seen waddling at the head of great processions of their sex carrying bundles of grass on their heads.

Our church was to be of a very temporary type, and we built it with a framework of sticks and lined the sides with grass. The roof was supported by a long line of tall, forked trees, on which a ridge of poles rested. In my impatience

and ignorance I sent a swarm of teachers to thatch the roof. But their combined weight proved too great for the framework, and I was suddenly horrified to hear a loud cracking sound as the forked trees spilt from top to bottom, and thatchers and roof disappeared in a cloud of dust into the interior. Happily, no one was hurt, and with plenty of merriment over the accident, all hands set to work to repair the damage done.

But when my practical and experienced colleague Mr. Stuart arrived on the scene he condemned our crude efforts, and set himself to serious brick-making, and the permanent extension of the school-building.

When the enlarged house was opened, it at once proved to be too small for the crowds who came. They packed themselves together on the floor like sardines in a box, and poor mothers, whose babies began to cry, found themselves inextricably fixed, much to their alarm, and to the discomfort of the preacher.

In 1898, we arranged to hold our first convention, and to this all the out-schools were invited to come, and to bring with them a thankoffering. As great congregations were expected, a square enclosure of grass was erected within which the people might comfortably gather. Leafy sheds were thrown up in the surrounding bush for the accommodation of visitors, and the village head-men were asked to provide hospitality for as many as they would.

The day before the convention began, long Indian files of white-robed people could be seen pouring down the hill-sides along the native paths, from every direction. One of the first companies to arrive was a party of about seventy from Mperembe's villages. They had brought with them a sheep and goat as their chief's contribution to the collection. The village head-men awaited the coming of the strangers in the station square, and led off large detachments of them to their homes, and when the near villages were crowded

with guests, the late-comers were accommodated in the sheds.

The convention lasted for five days, three meetings a day being held, with congregations of about three thousand in attendance. I shall not attempt a detailed description of the services. Have they not been most vividly portrayed by Mr. Henderson in Dr. Elmslie's book? Suffice it to say, that from the beginning to the end, the deepest religious feeling was present, and we who had been daily in touch with the catechumens and Christians, were amazed at the fervour and response which that convention called forth.

Of course, so great a crowd, and so much intensity of feeling required to be carefully guided, lest physical emotions be mistaken for true religion, and fervour waste itself in harmful or futile directions. One morning two of the leading teachers came to me to relate strange experiences they were having. They had been out in the bush at night praying. They felt as if their bodies had been lifted up from the earth, and bright angelic forms had come down to meet them, and they asked me to explain what these visions meant. Instead of doing so, I went through to the dispensary, and getting two big doses of salts, gave them each a dose, and sent them off to bed. Next day the visions had disappeared. But the strong piety which burst into bloom at that convention remains with them still, and in increasing beauty.

Our closing service on Sunday took a missionary form; some account was given of the deplorable condition in which we had found the Senga, and an appeal was made for volunteers to teach them. It was immediately answered. One and another rose, confessing how they had gone there in past years with the war parties, but now that better things had come to them, they desired to return with nobler intentions and make reparation by teaching the Gospel

of Peace. And so we inaugurated a new series of expeditions to Marambo, which have drawn the Senga out of their stockades, given them security, and kindled a great light which can never be put out.

The break-up of the convention and the return home of the companies made a deep impression on the land. The great ant-hills by the paths were full of people who watched them pass singing hymns, their faces lit with a new satisfaction. "Where has the *impi* been?" the old men cried. "What was the *indaba* that drew such crowds?" others inquired. And the tribe awoke to know that a new living Power was among them, changing the old order.

Now, there is nothing that makes for efficiency and better morals like spiritual religion. One saw how it made consciences more sensitive, and raised the tone of conduct among the Christians. In the villages the heathen saw it in the tender solicitude for the sick, the care of the widows and aged, and the spirit of brotherly helpfulness among the Christians. I saw it in the work of the teachers scattered in distant schools. There was a faithfulness and energy and influence not there before. Among the workers there awakened a conscience for honesty to which one could appeal. And the whole machinery of the mission began to run with a sweet smoothness.

With what eagerness Christians now began to serve the Kingdom of God! In one village I found the old sister of Mombera, the only one of that family who entered the Church, sitting in her hut in the evenings expounding the Scriptures to her poor slave women, and this was her nightly practice. Companies of stalwart young men walked miles on Sunday afternoons to distant villages to preach. And wherever there was a school, at sunrise and sunset the people gathered daily to worship.

We were now overwhelmed by the numbers of applicants for admission to the catechumen's class and to the

Church. It was no uncommon experience to find on one's arrival at some large school centre about a hundred men and women waiting for the necessary personal interview with the missionary, that they might publicly make profession of their faith. Then one would sit for hours on end, day by day, examining till one's head was dizzy, and exhaustion cried aloud, protesting.

Of course, a considerable weeding had to take place before the names of those who were examined were submitted to the Church. In general movements like this there is always a number who simply follow the crowd with little appreciation of the issues involved, and there are others who have not yet the necessary knowledge to understand what they would profess, and there are others again, whose village conduct is not consistent with a Christian profession. And so we sifted and sifted by conversation, and by public scrutiny of each name before any were received into Christian fellowship.

One of the most interesting results of the awakening was its effect on the old people who had hitherto been the hardest to influence. Not very many of the old men of authority have made profession of Christianity, but of the old women, a great multitude. I think the Gospel came to them with a peculiarly liberating and quickening power. Schools were opened for married women in the afternoons, that, when their day's work was over, they might have some opportunity of learning. Few of them ever attained to the stage of being able to read, but the daily lessons distinctly opened their intelligences, and the mere fact that they were in school with primers of their own, and a pencil and slate in their hands, made them feel that they were not left behind stranded while the young people sailed away on the flood-tide. I know no more pathetic and moving sight in all the land than these schools for the old, where bent and withered grandmothers may be seen peering through faded

eyes at their little primers trying in the evening-time of their lives to enter the garden land of knowledge, which had till then been closed against them.

Against two firm habits of the people the wave of religious life broke continually, and with some disintegrating effect. The first is the beer habit. How productive of crime, how demoralizing to village life, how clogging to all progress this custom of the people is only those who have passed their years among them can tell. One knows that their grain beer is a food, and that chiefs subsist on little else, and were it possible for them to use it in moderation one would have nothing to say against it. But indulgence is more congenial to the African than restraint. And I have never yet met the native who could call himself a moderate drinker. The great gourds in which the beer is served invite long potations. All public events, funerals, dances, harvestings, hoeings, are carried through with public drunken bouts. While beer is plentiful, the recruiting of labour is impossible. No attraction of money or cloth can compete with it. Out of these public carousals a crop of crimes, homicides, adulteries, and quarrels invariably is produced. Mothers neglect their children, or let them roll into the fire at night and get burned ; men club one another to death ; quarrels over nothing end in such furious hatred that villages are broken up and scattered. I have arrived at a garden where twoscore men and women were hoeing for beer, and a dispute had arisen whose sound we heard afar off. It had grown so furious, that when we appeared on the scene the men had laid aside their hoes, and were fighting with spears and shields.

To cultivate the millet grain from which the beer is brewed, the land is rapidly being deforested. The gardens require the richest soil, heavily fertilized with the ashes-potash of burnt trees. Two years' sowing leaves the ground too poor for further crops, and then a new patch has to be opened.

Beer, then, is one of the greatest enemies to the economic and moral welfare of the land, and against it the native Church has declared uncompromising war. Every catechumen and Church member is a total abstainer. One curious result of this is that the Christians instead of providing beer for the neighbours who come to hoe their gardens, provide a good square meal. And to-day the native can distinguish at once where gardens have been prepared and cleaned by beer, and where by food. Those who hoed for beer wasted their day, and scamped their work, so that the maize is dwarfed and weedy, compared with that in the gardens of the Christians.

Polygamy is another habit with which no compromise is made. I know there are people who hold that polygamy is necessary for the African. But they provide for no rise in his civilized status, and so make no readjustments. I can say with confidence from some knowledge of thousands of Africans, that it is no more necessary for the African than for the European, who has any ideal of home. Polygamy is necessitated by two things. The one is, the desire on the part of ambitious men for an adventitious respect and social standing which they think a plurality of wives will give them. The other is lust. So long as polygamy exists, there can be no family life, and the forces that bolster it are un-Christian.

When a man desires to enter the Church he must first put away his plurality of wives, retaining only the first he married, and a woman must come out of a polygamous union. Scores of such rearrangements of social bonds are made every year. And village life is so constituted that no hardship is put on the divorced woman. She either returns to her parents to live as a widow, or if she desires it she marries another. In these lands an unmarried woman is unknown, as also is a bachelor. "An old maid is a Christian institution."

I wish I could as confidently say that native Christianity has been uncompromising towards the more insidious evils of untruthfulness and harshness. Of course, every one acknowledges that these are opposed to the spirit of Christ, but not every one renounces them. Untruthfulness does not appear so much in deliberate lying, as in a partial statement of the case which is misleading, or in a denial of guilt when a charge is made. When cases are talked in court, it is a matter of supreme difficulty to arrive at the facts, because each party tells his story for his own advantage, concealing or denying what will hurt his case. And when witnesses are called up, social loyalty is so great that the friends of the culprit will confirm the one-sided version given by their side by a skilful concealment or partial statement, though they may be perfectly conscious of his guilt. To teach the Christian that he must tell the whole truth is a long and hard task.

Another of the signs of true religion which one would like to see more evident is that of kindness. One has to recognize that much of the social morality of the tribe was bulwarked by customs that are essentially cruel, and it is no suddenly accomplished feat to introduce purer manners, gentler laws, and, at the same time, save the state from moral collapse. For example, it has been the old custom to ascribe difficult labour to immorality on the part of the unhappy sufferer, who is worried into confession, true or false, of some misdemeanor, to avert the otherwise fatal issue.

Again and again one has had to impress on the Christians the horrible inhumanity of such treatment of their women in the hour of their darkness. They have protested that the safeguard of this belief is necessary for the protection of family life. But after making it a matter for severe Church censure, one is beginning to see the custom dying out.

Yet if this and some other examples of heathen harshness

still cling to the Christian, there are other examples of warm-hearted care which are delightful to see. One knows of cases where Christian lads have carried to hospital sick persons who had been abandoned, that they might be cared for. One of the most popular funds of the native Church is that for the care of the widows and helpless. To this money is given cheerfully, and many a miserable old slave woman has had her latter days brightened by the care of the Church. I came into a little village recently and found none of the Christians there. After pitching my tent, I waited till the evening for their appearing, and then they came with their evangelist at their head. They had spent the whole day hoeing the garden of an infirm old widow who could not help herself. And one knows many cases like this, and has seen the strong young Christians, when a new village was being built, setting apart some days, to build a house for some sick or widowed Christian, who had no other claim upon them than that she could do nothing for herself.

There are men whose whole thought for the African is the amount of labour he can be made to produce for their enrichment. And in their ignorance they are apt to cavil at Christian missions as spoiling the native for work. Now, it will be to their comfort to know, if they would believe me, that there is no force which compels men to work like Christianity, not even increased hut-taxes. We have seen again and again how one of the immediate effects of a school and of a religious movement is to make the people seek better things than daily intoxication. A new self-respect makes them clothe themselves and their families, and cloth will not be found without labour. The demand of the school for fees and books, the demands of the Church for liberality, create new necessities for wealth. And one has seen districts where the people used to spend their day in going from one beer gathering to another, now empty themselves by migrations to the labour centres, when once the school

has become influential, and we who seek for higher averages of attendance, and who care for the members of the Church, know how much difficulty the distance of the labour markets from Ngoniland has introduced into our ministration. I can say, confidently, that the wealthiest and the best-dressed, and the most reliable workers of the land, are the lads who have been awakened by the work of Christian missions. No missionary is so silly as to encourage idleness. And I hope, too, that no missionary is so blind to history as to believe that love of industry can be compelled by threats of punishment, by the *corvée* system, or by increased taxation. We believe in a better compulsion, the creation of a new man, with desires to rise into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER IX

THE STORY OF A FILIBUSTER

WE enter now on a somewhat painful chapter in the political history of the Ngoni, but it is well that it should be told, for it is an illustration of what has happened in many parts of Africa, and of the danger that may come to a people beyond the supervision of European Governments, when missionaries do not precede the advancing agents of a " superior " civilization. In 1898, after one of the early depressions which periodically befell the townships in Southern Rhodesia, some adventurous young men began to arrive in North Ngoniland in the hope of buying cattle at a cheap price. The first comers were men of good character, and one admired the pluck and endurance that had enabled them to face and complete the long tramp from the south, on the results of which they had staked the whole of their little capital. They came to us direct, and asked for advice and help in their enterprise, and we were glad to assist them, with the result that they were able to purchase, with calico and blankets, herds of, perhaps, two hundred cows at the absurdly low rate of thirteen to fourteen shillings a head. Unfortunately, of the first two, one paid for his trip with his life, and died at the Zambesi on his way back.

This money was wealth to the Ngoni, and as they had no other goods that they might barter for cloth, they welcomed the coming of these traders. When the first adventurers returned south, with their bargains, numbers of others soon

followed. And, in consequence, the price of cattle quickly rose to about thirty shillings. When several hundred head had been purchased, the natives ceased to sell, as they considered they had at the time sufficient cloth, and their kraals were being depleted.

But the country had now been discovered by traders, and strangers from the south were dropping in among us frequently with a view to making a bargain, and their presence was creating some uneasiness, as they were not so easily satisfied.

One day, when I was travelling about Njuyu, I got a message from the paramount chief asking me to come and deliver him from the presence of a white man in his village who was causing the people trouble. I went across to see the chief, and he told me that a European was living in a hut in his village, who spent his day turning over the stones on the graves of the dead and breaking them, and the people were much disturbed with this desecration. I then called on the European, and found him sitting on a native mat before a miserable hut having a solitary game of cards. We introduced ourselves in a friendly way and had some talk. He explained that he was prospecting for gold, and had found a very little in a stream. I told him about the chief's complaint, and he laughed, saying that he did not know that these stone-heaps were over graves, and was merely tapping the stones in his search for gold. But when he saw the difficulty he was creating, he undertook to avoid the graves, and move off to new quarters. I took care to make him understand the character of the people, and their recent emergence from lawlessness, and the danger of provoking a fierce spirit which might only be smouldering.

Some weeks after a messenger came in from Mperembe asking me to help him to get rid of two white men who were a nuisance to him and persisted in remaining on at his village. Such a temperate measure on the part of Mperembe

amazed me, for, but a year before, we could only approach him by careful observance of native courtesies, and not many years before no white man would have dared to impose himself on these chiefs without their consent. I sent a courteous letter to the two strangers, who turned out to be the gold prospector and his mate, asking them if they would mind going elsewhere, as Mperembe was annoyed and one would not care to be responsible for what he might do if he broke through his present restraint. I informed them how recently we had started work there, and expressed my conviction that they did not wish to create trouble. A polite reply was sent me, thanking me for what I had written, and assuring me that they would move away immediately.

This trouble was scarcely over, and the two prospectors gone back to the south, when more serious difficulties began to appear. Rumour after rumour reached me that a white man was in the country with an armed force emptying the cattle kraals, and doing violence to the people. These stories I did not at first credit, thinking them to be merely excited exaggerations ; but when a letter came in from my teacher, Daniel Nhlane, detailing the high-handed dealings of a white man, whose boys were armed with guns, I had to take the matter up.

Let me remind the reader, that at the time I was the only European settled in the country, that the British Government had not yet begun to administer the affairs of this tribe, and that the nearest Government official was two days' journey off, among the Tonga at the Lake shore.

Owing to my isolation and the pressure of work, I was not able to start out myself and cover the twenty miles that lay between Ekwendeni and the scene of those alleged outrages, so I sent a letter to Daniel asking him to go along with other teachers and see whether the reports were true.

Two days passed, and the answer to my inquiries came in the persons of four or five young men who arrived in great excitement and exhaustion, two of them bleeding from bullet wounds. They told me how Daniel, accompanied by some others, had gone to the village where the caravan of the European was settled. They had seen him driving cattle out of a kraal, and had seen him point a revolver at the owner, on his remonstrating, and thrash him on the back with a whip of hippopotamus hide.

Daniel had thereupon gone to the European along with his friends, and taking off his hat politely, he sat down to talk with him. Now, Daniel is a chief's son, and a man of decided self-respect, who in his youth knew how to use his spear with effect. For many years he has been one of our most energetic and influential teachers, but he is not a meek subdued youth of the crushed-worm type, so I have little doubt that when he spoke there were both remonstrance and indignation in his tones.

"Why do you come into our country," he asked, "seizing our cattle without paying for them?"

"Who sent you to talk to me, you nigger?" said the white man.

"My master sent me," answered Daniel. Here he exceeded the fact, for I had only asked him to verify for himself the rumours of violence.

"Who is your master?" asked the European.

"Mr. Fraser," answered Daniel.

"Well, go and tell your master that if he has anything to say he had better come himself, and not send niggers to speak to me." And with this he took his whip and lashed out at Daniel. This was more than the others could stand, and one of them, a man of somewhat passionate spirit, took his knob-kerry and hit Z—— on the head, inflicting a severe wound. Z—— promptly whipped out his revolver and emptied five cartridges among the boys. They fled. Then

the filibuster ran up an ant-hill and fired his repeating-rifle again and again at the retreating boys.

And so they came into Ekwendeni in headlong flight, the blood of their wounds still on them.

Matters had now become too serious for any amicable negotiations between the missionary and the stranger. So, after giving the fugitives a good meal, I wrote a note to Mr. Cardew, the magistrate at the Lake, asking him to come up at once, as serious developments would be sure to take place. I sent on the boys with the note with all speed, that they might tell their own story.

Next morning, a runner arrived from the paramount chief requesting me to come at once to his assistance, as the white man had left in the night, taking with him a huge drove of cattle. I answered that I could not leave Ekwendeni, and informed him that I had called on the Government to interfere.

Soon after another messenger from the chief made his appearance saying that the war regiments were gathering to pursue the European. With all haste I sent word again insisting that he should hold in his regiments, and sit quiet, until the Government agent arrived. Back came an answer that the head men could not be restrained. They saw their cattle leaving the country, and demanded to be allowed to follow and recover them. To this I sent on an urgent command that he should restrain his people lest more serious damage might be done, which would involve the whole tribe in disaster, and I said that if the district magistrate did not arrive in a few hours I would start with all speed for his village.

Meanwhile, by a fortunate coincidence, Mr. Murray arrived from the Institution, and I was able to leave him in charge at Ekwendeni, and almost at the same time Dr. Scott came in from Bandawe, where he had heard that there was serious trouble on the hills. Knowing that I was alone,

in the goodness of his heart he had come on at once to render me some help.

Starting out that night along with Dr. Scott, we pushed on for the disturbed district. When the morning broke we were on its borders, and the people, by some instinct, aware that we were on the path, came out to urge us on, and show us their wrongs. At one point, an old blind head man was seated in the bush waiting for us. He was over eighty years of age, and had been carried there by his people that he might pour out his tale to me. He told how when the white man's boys had entered his village, they had stripped him of his little belongings, whipped him, taken his cattle out of the kraal, and raped the women of the village.

As we proceeded along the path Ngoni came out to meet us, cursing the filibuster, and crying after us, "Kill him! kill him!"

At length we arrived at the paramount chief's village, and found the great kraal packed with men, and the chief sitting on a leopard skin at the far end. As soon as we had sat down and received their greetings business began. Mbalekelwa the chief called on one head man after another to state their experiences. Crowned men rose and told how this white man with a great band of followers, all carrying guns, had entered their villages, and selecting cattle from the kraal, had driven them off after throwing down a piece of cloth or blanket as payment. How they had remonstrated and had been threatened with a gun, or whipped with the *chikoti* (the hippopotamus-hide whip). Several showed the long weals of the whip on their skin. Women had been raped. One or two had been shot dead in their gardens. On the day that the white men fled with all his cattle, the people of Hoho turned out in war array and followed. The rear company of his caravan fled on seeing the pursuing warriors, and had abandoned their cattle and goods. Fifty

head of the deserted cows were driven back, and kept till I should come, and there they were, every beast of them, lowing outside the kraal. A number of boxes of gin and other belongings of the white man which had been thrown down by his terrified carriers, were then produced, and I was assured that not a spoon or rag was missing, nor had a man been harmed. One could not help wondering at the self-control of the people.

The great chief then rose to a loud shout of "Bayete," and throwing his toga with a magnificent sweep over his shoulders, and holding his long staff in his hand, strode up and down making a great harangue. "You have heard what these men have said," he cried, "and you have forbidden us to follow this robber and do him harm. We have obeyed because you say the word of God forbids to kill. But does the great Queen send her people among us with guns to seize our cattle and kill our people, and yet forbid us to defend ourselves and our property?"

When he had finished I rose and spoke. I told him that what the Queen most wished was peace and justice, and this man was a criminal against her laws. I pointed out that were he to allow his *impis* to attack the European, blood would be shed, and he and his people would be sure to suffer worse things, that I was here as a teacher of peace, not as a governor, so I had called on the nearest Government official to come at once to their protection, but that four days had passed, and no answer had been received to my letter. I then told him, that seeing the white man was rapidly pushing beyond their bounds, and the bounds of the Protectorate, I would go with them and follow him that we might call him back to speak the *indaba*. But three pledges must first be given, viz. that I was to be sole leader of the expedition, that no one who went with us was to touch beer lest passions would be inflamed, and that no one was to have any dealings with the white man but myself.

To this they roared their consent, and then the indunas burst into the circle and began to execute wild war-dances which sent the dust flying. We agreed that we should start next morning early.

That night a runner came in to camp from Mr. Cardew to say that he was on his way, having been detained by heavy rains, and now his *machila* had broken down some miles from where we were. We sent off another *machila* to him, and a team of fresh carriers, and he was soon among us. This was a mighty relief, for we now told him what we knew, and gladly threw the whole responsibility on his shoulders.

In the morning the *impis* began to appear. They came over the rolling hills in solid phalanx, some men with heads dressed with cock-feathers, and all carrying their shields and spears and clubs. As each company of about two hundred men approached the kraal they raised their clubs in the air, and whistling all together came rushing over the veldt with a light dancing tread. Entering the great kraal they formed up again, saluted the chief, and after a war-dance, took their places in the wide circle that was forming.

I asked the chief to let Mr. Cardew know his grievances, and told him I handed over the whole affair to the Government officer. When the dastardly tale had once more been related, Mr. Cardew denounced the dealings of the white man, and offered to follow him at once, if they would add to his little company of police a hundred of their picked responsible warriors, and one or two indunas. These were quickly forthcoming, and after we saw the pursuit start off to the south, we returned to Ekwendeni.

A week afterwards, Mr. Cardew returned. Z—— had had too long a start, and was already some days' journey beyond Ngoniland. But what Mr. Cardew had seen had convinced him of the quiet and peaceable condition of the country, and of the great wrong that had been done by the filibuster.

This was a matter of some consequence to me, for Z——, making straight for Fort Alston, had arrived there with his head bound up, and showing the serious wound he had received, had reported that Ngoniland was in a state of war, and that I had dispatched an *impi* after him which had seized a quantity of his cattle, while he had been attacked and barely escaped with his life. The collector accepted his story, and a demand for my arrest had been sent to Zomba, and for strong measures to be taken to pacify Ngoniland. Mr. Cardew having seen with his own eyes the real condition of affairs, thought my arrest was a little unnecessary, and sent a full report of what he had learned to Zomba.

Z—— was found at Fort Jameson, and he turned out to be an agent of a prospecting company in Rhodesia. He was immediately summoned to appear at Ekwendeni and stand his trial before the Deputy Commissioner. The trial took place on May 25th, 1899, and Z—— duly appeared accompanied by another white man who had come as a witness for the defendant. The charges preferred against him included stealing of cattle, assaulting natives, threatening with fire-arms, carrying on operations of war, and travelling with guns and ammunition. Practically no defence was made, but the accused pleaded ignorance of the law, and ignorance of the doings of his carriers, and some provocation. His witness turned out to be my friend the gold prospector, an American, who stood up to prove that he had found the country in a most unsettled condition, and had been most harshly treated by me and the natives. In evidence of this a letter was produced in court written by his mate, who was an American doctor, certifying that when T—— had returned from Ngoniland he had been so evilly treated that he was suffering severely from "pediculosis." The Commissioner's eyebrows went up. What dreadful disease was this? And a curious grin appeared on the faces of those who understood.

There was no doubt about the proof. Not only was he found guilty on each count, but it was also shown that he had seized some forty old guns in native villages and distributed them among his followers, whom he drilled as soldiers. "We had no powder for the guns," he pleaded. But the Commissioner pointed out that to march through a village with forty unloaded guns would just as effectually terrorize the people as if each carrier had a keg of powder on his back as well as his gun on his shoulder. Evidence was also given of numerous cases of rape by his men, and of shooting at and killing two men, and wounding an old woman.

Unfortunately, not one-tenth of the people whose cattle had been taken were summoned to the trial, and so evidence was only led to prove the stealing of cattle from the three or four head men who had been summoned.

The Deputy Commissioner in the summing-up spoke very plain words to the accused, finding him guilty on every count but the one which charged him with firing at and wounding certain boys. This was eliminated, as he felt there had been provocation. I was censured for having sent a native teacher to speak to the white man, which, by the way, I had not done; but the judge felt he must hold the balances of justice blindfold, and not allow all the blame to be put on one side.

The upshot was that this filibuster who had caused the death of two men, the wounding of several, the raping of many women, who had stolen many scores of cattle without payment, taken many scores of others by force after a nominal payment, had assaulted head men, and brought the country to the brink of war, was fined £50, or six months' imprisonment with hard labour, had to pay thirty shillings compensation to the nearest relative of those who had been killed, and to restore the stolen cattle which had been claimed in court. The fine was at once paid. The boxes

of gin and other items and all the seized cattle were returned to him except those few which were claimed by the witnesses in court, and so he went forth, having made a magnificent profit of his raid.

As he left the court he was overheard saying to his friend the prospector, "These missionaries are ruining the country." And the prospector, with an oath, agreed.

Z—— was not expelled the country. He passed back to Fort Jameson with his recovered treasure. And a year or two after was imprisoned again by the Rhodesian Government for filibustering on a considerable scale in their territory.

One effect of this trial was that the purchase and exportation of cattle from northern Ngoniland without a special licence from Government headquarters was forbidden, and so the temptation to exploit this unadministered territory was removed.

PART II. THE TUMBUKA

CHAPTER X

HISTORY OF THE TUMBUKA

DURING the early years of our mission work, the tribe was rightly called the Ngoni, for the invaders pervaded the whole atmosphere of the composite people whom they ruled. But, gradually, as their power decreased with the suppression of the war spirit, and the growing intelligence of the serfs, their language and customs began to be less predominant, and the common vernacular of the young people especially became more and more distinctly Tumbuka. With the coming of the administration the few remnants of the power and prestige of the Ngoni began rapidly to diminish. Then there came a long succession of deaths in the course of three or four years, by which every one of the old chiefs, with a fighting history and an almost sacred authority, disappeared, and their place and authority have never been given to any of their successors.

We missionaries ceased using the Ngoni language as the medium for our preaching, when we found that great parts of our audiences were becoming unfamiliar with it, and we began to speak and teach in Tumbuka, a proceeding which soon brought us into closer touch with the serfs who were the autochthones of this land, and at present compose the greater part of the population.

During the past years their history and customs, which had been overshadowed by the martial history and prouder

customs of the Ngoni, gradually have been coming to light ; and while most of what one has to record about them has more an antiquarian than a present-day interest, there still remains a certain understrain of the past in their habits of thought and general outlook. Since the Ngoni predominance has been disappearing, there has also been a considerable resuscitation of the old customs and worship among these Tumbuka.

I have, therefore, in the following chapters tried to give a little of what we have learned concerning the history and practices of this submerged tribe.

The past of the Tumbuka people is hid in the mists of prehistoric times, and, so far, we have not yet been able to discern it in much detail. It seems as if no one in the tribe is able to go back more than three generations and describe even inaccurately the condition of the people. Had they possessed a definite tribal organization within that period and done deeds worthy of tradition, records would possibly have been preserved. The Ngoni can trace their movements well back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, but among them also history only begins with the appearance of their tribal organization.

Unfortunately, disintegration had set in among the Tumbuka more than a hundred years ago, and in the generation of the grandfather of the oldest living man there was no centralizing power around which tradition might gather. But that they must have been a great tribe once, with some rallying centre, is evident from their wide distribution and from the customs common to them which are very clearly distinguishable from those which obtain among other Central African tribes. For example, girls were not married until they were past puberty, whereas in most of the tribes in these regions child-marriage was common. Sons inherited from their fathers, whereas in other tribes the line of succession is by nephew, that is, sister's son.

Few dances have a Tumbuka origin, and those that have are nearly all unobjectionable, while most of the other tribal dances are deplorably evil. Yet, that the tribe came originally from the same stock as nearly all Nyasaland peoples, is evident from the close similarity of their language, and from the common tradition that makes them all emerge from the north, and pass through a great gorge through which the Rukuru flows.

Their wide distribution is evident from a study of the maps of explorers. When Laçerda, at the end of the eighteenth century passed on his journey north to Kazembe's he marked the Tumbuka as living in the Loangwa Valley. Livingstone found that all the villagers whom he questioned around Kasungu were Tumbuka, and in his map he calls the land from the Bua to the Dwangwa, Tumbuka country. We also find to-day traces of their presence all over the country which is now called north Ngoniland, or Mombera's. Thus last century the Tumbuka tribe was distributed from latitude 14° south to 11°, and between longitudes 32° and 34°, an area of about 20,000 square miles. My impression is that these data of distribution given by the earlier explorers are true, and that although only a small part of this great territory can be called Tumbuka land to-day, they were the autochthones of that whole country a century ago.

In the south they are now called Chewa, that seems due to the fact that north of the Bua there came a hundred years ago an incursion of Nyanja speaking tribes from the south who entered into and settled among the Tumbuka in overwhelming numbers. They amalgamated with the Tumbuka, and the language spoken changed slightly to that of the closely allied tongue of the invaders. When Livingstone passed that way the amalgamation was not yet complete, and although some villages still speak Tumbuka as far south as the head waters of the Bua, almost all the others have

adopted the dialect and tribal marks of that composite people who are now called Chewa.

About the same time that this southern incursion seized these lands, there occurred an invasion of Biza fugitives from the north-west, fleeing before the cruel wars of the Bemba kingdom of Kazembe. I have already in Chapter VII written of this invasion which changed the tribal name for the people of the Loangwa Valley to Senga. After overwhelming the feeble Tumbuka population, it pressed back some fugitives to the foot-hills lying between the Ngoni plateau and the Loangwa plain. A few Tumbuka head men, however, saved themselves by acknowledging the new Biza chiefs, and to-day their villages are still to be found as distinct little communities, settled under the recognized Senga chiefs. The new-comers were far from warlike, and were only desirous of peace and safety from the troublesome war parties of the Bemba. They did not molest the surrounding peoples after they had settled themselves into the Marambo plain, hence considerable Tumbuka communities remained in the valleys of the foot-hills, until they were driven out by the Ngoni. One of the paths that lead to the Loangwa plain to-day passes by an ancient heap of stones which stands alone in a great reach of uninhabited and poor stone land. Here is buried one of these Tumbuka chieflets whose villages lay in the valley below. He became possessed of an evil spirit, went forth dancing in the night-time alone and naked, and drew on himself the suspicion of being a sorcerer. His people made him go through the poison ordeal, and as he was unable to vomit the poison, he was pronounced guilty of the charge, was stoned to death on this hill-top, and his body burned, and over him a heap of stones was thrown, and to this day all who pass that way place a stone on the mound lest their feet swell. And so the pile has grown through the past two generations until it is now of great size, though the travellers who pass are very few.

This ghastly monument is the only visible sign so far as the eye can reach of the presence of the little communities that once lived in these unattractive valleys.

Many of them were iron workers, and they drove a thriving trade in hoes and axes with the Senga and Biza traders, who exchanged strong woven cloths from their own looms, and poison for arrows, for such iron implements as the Tumbuka smiths could give them.

A generation after the first Biza incursion, perhaps about the early half of the nineteenth century, a notable incursion by another band of fugitives took place in the north. These were led by Kampungu (afterwards called Chikurmayembe the First). His party came across the Lake in canoes from Mpoto, where there has been a considerable Arab-slaving centre for some time back. Kampungu did not belong to any known Central African tribe, and he is described as a light-skinned man, accompanied by a band of dark men none of whom had wives. They are said to have been driven out of Mpoto by war. It is scarcely possible that he was an Arab, while his followers were coast men, for they evidently were not Mohammedans. They came ostensibly to buy ivory, and settled down among the Kamanga people near Njakwa Mountain. Kampungu found here great stores of ivory, and opened up a lucrative trade. He married daughters of the local chiefs, and seized their little kingdom, making them his head men.

He seems to have gone mad shortly after, and commenced a series of bloody reprisals on his own relatives, and the people whom he ruled, in consequence of which great parties of the Kamanga tribe fled south, driving the Tumbuka before them, and taking possession of their villages and gardens. These Tumbuka fled back to the Loangwa Valley and built among the Senga in the old land of their forefathers, others went south to Kasungu, and as far as the Bua, where they settled among their fellow-tribesmen. But, though the

Tumbuka who fled to Marambo adopted the Senga tribal marks, many of them returned in the next generation to their own land to be under the protection of the Ngoni, and to-day one may find in Ngoniland many of these old people, with all the outward signs of being Senga, who still remain emphatically Tumbuka.

Kampungu was not allowed to continue for long his havoc among his own people, for his uncle Bwati, accompanied by further bands of people from Mpoto, crossed over and arrived in Kamanga country. Finding that all that his nephew had gained was being lost by his madness, Bwati made war on him, and drove him and another uncle into a hut. They surrounded the house with thorns and burnt the two of them alive, and then took possession of the new kingdom. Bwati must have been a man of considerable wisdom, for during his lifetime he succeeded in bringing all the Kamanga, Henga, and the northern section of the Tumbuka into allegiance to him without much fighting. When he died he was succeeded by his son Pitamkusa (Chikuramayembe the Third) who further consolidated the kingdom, and continued to attract a considerable commerce in ivory. With the peace which these two chiefs inaugurated the fugitive Kamanga returned to their own land, and left the Tumbuka country to stragglers who ventured to return. The Chikuramayembes seem to have adopted the language and worship of their new people, and to have settled large numbers of their relatives as chiefs of the little Tumbuka and Henga clans. They were in a fair way to establish again a great tribe who acknowledged them as head when, just after the death of Pitankusa, the Ngoni horde arrived on the scene. They camped near the capital of this chief, and swooping down on it entirely destroyed it, and drove the children of Chikuramayembe into exile. Two of these sons, Mjuma and Mwendera, many years afterwards rebelled, and tried again to gather their people about them, but the

Ngoni attacked and killed them, and finally blotted out this new dynasty. This took place about thirty years ago.

Apart from this little history, the tradition of the Tumbuka and allied peoples is inarticulate. The tribe had broken into a vast number of little clans which owed no allegiance to one another, and have no history of deeds worthy of record. Many of these clans again had split into numerous sections, villages becoming scattered, and the people owning allegiance to no chief, till a great portion of the tribe lived in hamlets no larger than were necessary for the accommodation of a man's family, and when he was monogamous his village consisted of one house built on an ant-hill.

Quarrels could no longer be adjusted, and the whole tribe, utterly disintegrated, was in a continual state of unrest. When a man had a quarrel with his neighbour there was no court of appeal, all he could do was to lie in wait in the path and shoot his unsuspecting enemy with a poisoned arrow, and so settle his grievance. Life became very cheap. Men were known to kill their neighbours for no other reason than to get possession of some mushrooms which the other might be carrying. One clan which lived on the Vipya became so riven that no two houses were built together. If a man had two wives the houses were placed several hundred yards apart, and no path of communication was tramped between them or between the huts of neighbouring friends. When friends visited one another they leaped from one tuft of grass to another, lest by wearing out a regular path they should discover their houses to enemies.

During this period of tribal dissolution many of the arts and social customs of the people seem to have been forgotten. Over a wide tract of Tumbuka land the ruins of old smelting furnaces were standing, but the art of smelting had been forgotten. Internal discord had made the necessary combination for the production of iron impossible.

When the Ngoni, under Zongwendaba, passed through

the country on their march north, seventy years ago, this was the state of demoralization in which they found a great part of the Tumbuka, and possibly the difficulty of attacking and absorbing such small communities, accounts for the little havoc they did to the tribe. But their passage revealed to the local people the necessity of combination, and in the presence of a common danger the petty quarrels were forgotten, and the natives gathered together in considerable villages, round which they built strong palisades. The scattered hamlets of the high savannahs withdrew to the thickets, which are formed on some of the hill-tops by a clump of aged trees that have resisted the bitter blasts that blow over those wide open parks. Within the dark clusters of creeping plants that cling about those trees and flourish in the cold wetting mists they erected their little hovels, where none could see them. Chiefs were reappointed, social loyalty was again observed, and many of the old customs were revived. And when the Ngoni horde returned under Mombera twenty years later they found the people under a better organization, but presenting at the same time more profitable plunder to the irresistible warriors.

If the history of the Ngoni illustrates the manner in which kingdoms have sprung up in Africa, the history of the Tumbuka illustrates that disintegration that sets in when the central authority has disappeared, and the way in which peoples have been lost to history, or swallowed up in some stronger power that has invaded them.

But who the Tumbuka were, whence they came, how they became a nation, and what was the cause of the beginning of their dissolution—these things still remain a mystery.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION OF THE TUMBUKA

WHEN one starts out to systematize the faith of the Tumbuka, one is confronted by the fact that they themselves are scarcely conscious of any religious belief. But after patient investigation their atmosphere is found to be charged with religion, and although few can define and distinguish what they worship, their lives are surrounded by spiritual powers which they acknowledge, and which play a great part in their common life.

They believe in God, but this is one of the least influential articles of their faith, for God is to them an absentee deity. He is called *Chiwuta*, which might mean the great bow, but apparently does not, at least, no native will agree that the name has any relation to the bow of the firmament, or of the Avenger, or any other kind of bow. What the root of the word is, no one seems yet to have discovered. Chiwuta is known as the creator, and the master of life and death. By Him the world was made, and everything that has life. It is He who sends the great diseases, like rinderpest, and small-pox, and He too is the sender of death. The only characteristic of God that the raw native is sure of is this, "He is cruel, for it is He who takes away the children," but where He lives, and what He thinks they do not know. To the general imagination, He has withdrawn from the world, and has nothing to do with it, beyond sending death or disease.

I do not think that I have yet found that prayers were addressed to the Creator God, though they were frequently offered to the local deities, who also, when they were not named by their personal titles, were called Chiwuta. The Creator was too unknown and too great for the common affairs of men.

Throughout these Nyasa tribes there are also local sub-gods who dwell on mist-crowned hills, and have special control of the rains and other natural forces. The God of the people on the Tumbuka and Henga plateau was called Chikang'ombe, and he abode on a high hill, Njakwa, below which the Rukuru rushed in tumbling cataracts through a narrow gorge. The people on the Loangwa plain worshipped Zambwe, to the south Mangazi was the tribal deity. The place where each one of these sub-gods lived was a great mountain-top, from which the rains seemed to come, and around which white mists continually hung.

Chikang'ombe is no longer worshipped. When he failed to protect the people from the Ngoni invasion, he was repudiated, and his worship gradually ceased. But in the days of his power he was a male god, whereas Mangazi and Zambwe were both female, and the wives of Chikang'ombe—a fact that seems to prove that the Tumbuka once occupied this whole land, from Mount Dedza to Zambwe. Some people claim to have seen Chikang'ombe. His body was like that of a great snake, but he had a mane like a lion. When the wind blew strong from the north, Chikang'ombe was on his way to visit his wife Mangazi, and the course of his journey could be traced by the stalks of maize that were broken down in his progress. When the wind blew from the south he was returning, or his wife was on her way to visit him.

Chikang'ombe was not worshipped independently by individuals. He was a tribal god, and when he was approached the chief came along with his people, and chose

one to lead the worship. While he prayed the assembled tribesmen sat silently listening with bowed heads, and in their name he made offering of cattle or beads or garden produce. Now and then a girl was dedicated to him to be his wife. After her dedication she lived apart, and was greatly honoured. She dressed her hair with beads to resemble the mane of the god, and she remained throughout her life unmarried. In her the god was incarnated. Sometimes a boy was dedicated to Mangazi and there are said to be alive more than one man and woman who were so given over to Chikang'ombe and Mangazi; but I have not seen them, and their location seems to be very elusive. Their lives, however, at Port Herald on the Shire, a well-known woman Mbona, in whom the local god is supposed to dwell, and around whom an extraordinary amount of superstitious dread still clings, for there Christian missions have made almost no progress. One of the women reported to be still alive, who was dedicated to Chikang'ombe, is called Nya-Mboni (Mrs. Mboni). Mboni is a string of beads such as was offered in sacrifice. She is said to live apart in a house away from all villages, and to be much consulted as his oracle, by those who still believe in the power of Chikang'ombe. His visits used to be paid in the evening when the wind blew hard. Then she would sweep out her house, and carry forth the ashes from the fireplace, and quench her fire by pouring earth over it. All night she would sit still with trembling, for the god was with her, and had come to see how she was conducting herself. In the morning he would go forth, and leave her.

Besides these great sub-gods, many of the mighty natural objects were worshipped, such as conspicuous hills, wild waterfalls, great trees, deep pools. They were not reverenced as the dwelling-place of some deity or spirits, but as themselves animate and divine. Thus two hills in the Rukuru gorge are often worshipped. Passers in the gorge declare

that they can sometimes hear the cocks belonging to the hills crow, and when the sound of the tumbling water echoes between the mountain-sides they say the hills are at war with one another, and they travel on in haste and terror.

Certain large pools, too, were worshipped, and sometimes a wandering native would see a fabulous snake with a red head enter one of the sacred pools, and this he believed was the pool-god, and at once he would call his fellow-villagers to make sacrifice there. In these waters no one would dare to bathe. When the people passed near one of these sacred places they went quietly and in fear. Should one of them in his terror find that his feet were perspiring he threw himself down on his face at once. This was the sure sign that his sins were discovered, and he confessed aloud, and offered his propitiatory gifts of beads or food, throwing them into the water. If two had been quarrelling, they would not venture to pass until they had effected a reconciliation.

There still stand throughout the land great giants of the forest that have been sacred from time immemorial. They were living things and were worshipped accordingly. When decayed branches fell no one would venture to pick them up. There are bare stretches of land on which nothing but stunted bush grows, and over which the women laboriously search for firewood, yet in the midst of this scrub such a giant tree may be seen, with quantities of dead wood lying around, which no one is so sacrilegious as to gather. These trees were holy places, and hence became the haunts of some of the ancestral spirits; and so underneath their shade little temples to the departed spirits would be built, where offerings might be placed. But these temples were not for the tree-spirit, they were for the ancestors who chose that sacred ground for their abode. Worship of the hills and trees, like that of the sub-gods, was not an independent

action of the individual, but the united invocation of the clan or tribe.

The most active spiritual agents are the ancestral spirits. They are everywhere, and continuously intervening for good or evil, though their influence is limited to the affairs of their relatives. The spirit of a man is supposed to manifest itself in his shadow, and when a man is dying the shadow grows less, until at death it entirely disappears. The spirit is quite distinct from the body, and frequently goes on excursions on its own behalf. When a man lies asleep and dreams, his spirit has gone upon a journey, and the dreams are the events that meet it, perhaps it goes and has converse with the dead, or with those who are far away, and should it not return in time the man will be found dead. You shout to the sleeper to waken him, and it is by the ear the soul returns to the body. These dreams are very real events to the natives, and what is seen in them is held to be fact.

One time when I was many days from home, my table boy, who is an intelligent Christian, came to me in the morning in great distress and said he must go home at once. I asked his reason for this, and he answered that his child was lying very ill at home. This surprised me, and I inquired whether he had received this intelligence by messenger. "No," he said, "but I dreamed last night that he was dying." It took a great deal of persuasion to induce him to continue with us on our journey and pay no attention to the dream, and when some weeks after we arrived home he was greatly surprised to find that there had been nothing the matter with his child.

Should a man dream that he met with one of his dead relatives, in the morning he would go at once to the little temple he had built for him and make some offering of foodstuff.

What a young person saw in his sleep he was not allowed

BAOBAB TREE

These trees are supposed to grow to a great age. They have little foliage, but they bear a fruit which gives a pleasant acid drink to the thirsty traveller.

AT EKWENDENI

This holiday party of ladies and children is a good evidence of the quiet peace of Ngoniland to-day. A baby is sitting in a *machila*, the common carriage of the land.

to tell to the older people. Should he do so he would be violently scolded and beaten, for the old people feared some dangerous omen of approaching death. But when the elders dreamed they could tell the story of their experiences to all alike. Before men started out for a long journey they eagerly sought to have pleasant dreams. If they were of maize it was a good omen, but should they be of a funeral they knew that death awaited them. There were certain people who were famous for their power of foretelling the future, and of discovering lost articles through their dreams. One old man, now dead, was much honoured for this power. When a villager had lost his hoe, or spear, or some other article, though it might be years before, this old man could dream about the missing possessions, and in the morning he would call the owner and go with him to the place where his property was lying. On the day of his death, he called his fellow-villagers to his hut, and said, "Good-bye. To-day I shall die. You are going to your gardens, but when you return you will not find me, for I shall have gone." And it was so. There were certain simple rules for interpreting dreams. Thus, if a man saw a pit or hole in the earth, the meaning was that death was coming. Maize foretold health and life, a river signified that death was near, for its waters were the tears of the mourners.

Many of the natives are credited with powers of second sight. Two of our leading evangelists can tell remarkable stories of things they have seen in daylight with their eyes open, and after events proved that these things actually happened at some distant place at that same time. There are men who have seen their friends die in some far country, others who have seen an approaching war party, and others who have seen where game were feeding, and when they led out the hunters, found them just as the vision had declared.

One cannot say that the Tumbuka believed in immortality, for the spirits faded into oblivion after a few generations,

but they did believe that after the body died the spirit lived on. The spirits are supposed to live "below," in a great valley where everything is good. I have heard of one man who had himself seen the abode of the spirits. He was supposed to have died, and his body was tied up in a mat and prepared for burial, but, to the surprise of the mourners, signs of returning life were seen. On his recovery he told how he had gone by a narrow road until he came to a great village where the people lived without marriage. He had spoken to them, but none would hold conversation with him. They told him to begone, for he was not wanted there. He tried to tell his fellow-villagers this wonderful story, but no one would listen to him. They beat irons together and tried to drown his words, for he was too uncanny.

The land of the dead is a good land where no hunger or sorrow touches them. But they live as young men and women, and grind their heavenly corn, and dance together and have beautiful domestic fowls. Sometimes in the quiet of the night a sound will be heard in the wood like the beating of a distant drum, and the people say, "The spirits are dancing in their village."

When men who have lived selfish and cruel lives die, their spirits get a poor welcome in this nether world. The others meet them with scorn, slap them on their faces, and dance about them in derision. But beyond this lack of welcome I have never heard of any belief in rewards or punishments in the hereafter life.

The movements of the dead are not circumscribed. They wander over the world, wherever their relatives go, helping or hindering them. When a man is walking through the wood, he may hear a twig snap, and concludes that some ancestral spirit (*chibanda*) is there, so he breaks another twig and throws it in the direction of the sound, and when he gets home puts some offering in the little temple.

The spirits live in many creatures, especially in snakes. There are two little harmless ones which they particularly frequent: the blind worm, and a snake with a saw-like backbone. Should natives meet one of these on the path, they turn home, and the journey is not resumed, but a "doctor" is called to tell what ancestral spirit this was that had warned the traveller of danger ahead and oblations are made. If a native meets a puff-adder in the scrub, he does not kill it, but returns to worship some spirit that inhabited the adder. And when one of the little snakes enters a hut it is not driven forth, for it is a spirit come to live with the friends, and its intentions are good.

The spirits of chiefs and other great people were believed to have a special affinity to lions, and to send them to devour people when they were hungry, or to stand about the terrified native to defend him when they are benevolent. Should a man suddenly find himself face to face with this most terrible of enemies, he cries at once to his ancestral spirits beginning at the earliest until he comes to the latest departed one. "Oh, grandfather, save me; oh, grandmother, save me; oh, brother, save me," he cries, until he has completed the list; and should he find himself unattacked and unhurt he returns to offer grateful sacrifices for his preservation.

Before starting out on a long journey the traveller called the witch-doctor to help him with his worship, and tell him what spirit must be propitiated, and if the issue was prosperous, a goodly part of his gains were consecrated to the friendly spirit.

But the spirits were not always so good-natured. It was they who sent all calamities, and when sickness could not be expelled, great efforts were made by the specialists to find out which ancestral spirit was offended, and was punishing its victim, and offerings were made of beer, or meal, or cloth.

When good luck came, they said, "I have a beneficent

spirit." When evil luck came, they said, "I have an unfriendly spirit," and they sought to appease it. The spirits are everywhere. It is dangerous to eat in the dark lest a spirit put his hand into the plate and eat with you. In the night-time ghostly visitants slap poor sleepers on the face, and they rise and cry, "I have sinned. A *chibanda* has punished me for my sin," and they make sacrifices.

In the villages, and especially beneath the *msoro* tree, the people built diminutive huts, about eight inches in circumference and eighteen inches high. Sometimes these temples were much larger, and so valuable an offering as a tusk of ivory might be placed in them, and it was not taken out to be sold until it was replaced by another. Offerings of beer or meal were also put in them: should the rats or cockroaches partake of the food, the people said, "The spirits have accepted our offering and are appeased." Though no watch is set upon these gifts to the spirits, no hungry man will dare to steal them, for it is a most dangerous offence to cheat the shades of the dead. Beneath the *msoro* or the wild fig-tree, was the usual place for these little temples. One can imagine a simple reason for the reverence of the fig-tree, but it is a little hard to discover why the *msoro* tree is the peculiarly sacred tree of the Nyasaland people. It has no edible fruit, and is usually scarcely bigger than a well-developed bush. But around it there are many legends. The lion is supposed to hide the tail and ears of the animals it kills under the *msoro* tree, so that it may creep up to its victims unobserved. Some say that in doing this the lion is worshipping his own *chibanda*, who resides beneath the tree, but apart from this instance I have found no belief that animals also have souls. The leopard, too, is said to hide the meat it reserves in the branches of the *msoro*, and an intelligent youth has told me that he himself dug up from the foot of a *msoro* tree the tail of a dog which a leopard had killed the previous night near his village, and

that the tail had been buried there by the leopard. Some of the old men declare that the lion has taught them to reverence this tree. When a man would build a temple to his ancestor he first consults a "doctor," who points out the particular *msoro* where the temple must be built.

CHAPTER XII

TUMBUKA NATURAL SCIENCE

THERE is a curious resemblance between the Tumbuka's idea of the universe and that of the ancient Semites. The world appears to them to be flat and circular, and to float on a great sea. Over it is the firmament, a hard stony vault which holds up the waters that are above the sky. The stars are the "eyes" of this vault through which the water filters when the rain comes. The firmament is upheld by great pillars that God erected where the sky meets the earth, and on these pillars there are stationed certain very old people whose continual duty it is to drive away the little birds that come to pick at the props of the sky, and at the sun when it passes down into the west. Should they neglect their work the sky will fall, and universal destruction will follow. Sometimes the old people are not watchful enough, and the little birds peck at the glowing sun, and then we see those rolling white mists that come over the hills in the evening when the sun has gone down, and in the morning when the sun is rising. They are the dust of the sun that has been pecked at by the little birds.

Clouds are the smoke of the innumerable village fires that are kindled throughout the world, and they come up big and heavy at the end of the hot dry season, for it is then that the great grass fires are in full progress. As the smoke rises it gathers about the sky-roof, forming into heavy masses, which collect the rain that filters through the little star eyes.

The sun rises out of water in the east, and sinks again in the west, passing overhead above the sky during the night to its proper rising-place. The moon is a polygamous male. He has two wives, the evening and the morning stars, who are called Nyavipyenga (Mrs. Cooked) and Nyazuwulani (Mrs. Uncooked). When the moon comes to the house of Nyavipyenga, the evening star, he is thin and hungry, but she will not feed him for she is not ready yet. Her rule is that his food must be properly cooked. But when he comes to the house of Nyazuwulani he is fat and flourishing, for she brings forth abundance for him to eat, though the time for cooking is not yet come. The moon has most marked influence on the weather. If the rains break while the moon is still sharp and thin in the east, the people do not go out to plant, for they say it is an erratic rain which will not be followed by regular showers, but the tree caterpillars come forth in abundance, and the folks leave their villages and go to the woods to gather this luscious relish. But should the rain come when the moon has drunk water, that is, when it rises at night out of the east, all other occupations are suspended, and the whole tribe sallies joyfully forth to the gardens to plant their maize. The phases of the moon are watched with eagerness, for they indicate the change in the weather. The beginning of the first and third quarter are the particular phases that mean a change from the temporary drought to good rains.

An eclipse of the moon or of the sun indicates that a terrible battle is taking place between these redoubtable warriors. As soon as the blackening edge is seen to come over the moon the villagers turn out of their huts and begin a dreadful clamour. Drums are beaten, horns and pipes are blown, men and women together strike their pounding pestles noisily in the large wooden mortars which have no food within to deaden the sound, and men grind axes on stones, and do not cease until the moon shines out again

with its wonted brightness. All this is done lest the fight between the two great warriors end in the death of the world's inhabitants.

The rainbow is a column of smoke which rises out of one of those deep holes that one sees often in the ant-hills. It is the breath of some mysterious creature that lives within. But it is also called the Lightning's Bow.

As I have already remarked, lightning is conceived of as a black bird like a cock. It kills people with its fiery breath, and marks them with its claws. The shining of the lightning is caused by its descent, and the thunder is the noise of its wings as it ascends. Its favourite place of descent is among the bamboos, and natives place tall bamboo poles in front of the door of their huts that this deadly bird may descend without harming the helpless inhabitants. When people are killed, as happens every year, a "doctor" is called, and after sacrifice, he washes all the villagers with some medicine of which he has the secret, and all the fires are taken from the houses, and thrown down at the cross-roads. Then the doctor kindles new fire by friction and lights again the village hearths.

When the dread rumblings of an earthquake are heard in the daytime or in the night, everyone is roused and, rushing out of the huts, begins to call: "He! He! He!" The same cry as rises involuntarily when a man thinks himself to be possessed by a spirit. They think the earthquake has come to take away some of their chiefs, and they salute the mighty force. But if tremor succeeds tremor, and all the salutations have no effect, terror seizes the chiefs, and they send for the nearest expert, that he may tell them why these earthquakes come so often, and what propitiation it is necessary for them to make.

The year is divided into five seasons. It begins with *Chifuku*, the time of the opening rains at the end of November. Four months after, when the fresh maize begins to

be eaten, the *Masika* season commences, and two months after it is followed by *Vuna*, the harvesting-time. This lasts two months (July and August), and then comes *Chisaru*, the hot season, succeeded by the *Luwondwe* season, when the fresh leaves come upon the trees in brilliant colours like the autumnal tints at home.

The rains are distinguished by several names. The first showers are called *Chizima malupya*, for they follow on the grass fires, and the burnings in the gardens, and extinguish them, driving the black ashes into the earth. A month after this first refreshing shower comes *Kwambuka*, that is the " beginning " of the rainy season. Towards the close of the season when only gentle showers have been falling there comes one day of drenching rain which is called *Kukura nyuni*, for it tears the seeds out of the spear-head grass.

There are also distinguishing names for the various types of showers which fall throughout the rainy season. Some of them are called according to the direction from which they come, and the main points of the compass are designated by some known country that lies in that direction. The north-west, from which the best rains come, is *Zambwe*, a sacred hill where one of the sub-gods lives. The north-east is *Mpoto*, a district on the other side of Lake Nyasa. The south-east is *Mwera*, the east *Mtonga*, each one of these being lands which lie in that direction.

The heavy thunder showers are called *Mpanga ;* the long wetting rains which last for hours and days without stopping, and come in February, are called *Mswera*, because they stop all work and travel ; the white mists that roll about the highlands are called *Nya-tutwe* from their whiteness.

CHAPTER XIII

HUNTING

IN the days when the Tumbuka were thinly scattered over an immense area, all kinds of game abounded, but the coming of more people with the invasion of the Ngoni drove the large antelope and elephants from some of their haunts, and when rinderpest swept over the lands the woods and open glades seemed to have been almost denuded of the larger fauna. To some places elephants have never returned, but in others there is now a considerable increase of many species of big game, and in the Loangwa Valley there are large tracts that are again a sportsman's paradise.

The days when Tumbuka custom and habits were stereotyped were long before the coming of rinderpest, or the introduction of Arab traders of old muzzle-loading guns which led to the rapid destruction of game. Hence, in the folklore and traditions of the people, hunting occupies a very important place, and old men speak of an age that is past when meat was abundant, and every village regularly dieted on it.

Yet the Tumbuka had great odds to contend against, for they were poorly equipped with hunting instruments. For the smaller animals they laid ingenious little spring traps on the game runs and human paths. They also made strong nets of bark twine, which they stretched out among the trees, and into which they drove the little buck. In places

frequented by large antelope they built a very long rough fence, putting much magical medicine on the stakes. At intervals openings were left in this fence and then deep narrowing pits were dug. Near the bottom of the pits where the sides began to come together, sharpened stakes were fixed, and the top of the pit was covered with light twigs and a layer of grass. Sometimes a considerable haul of game was got from these traps, and too often an unwary traveller stepped into them and met his death, being impaled on the stakes.

Bows and arrows were the usual hunting weapons. The arrows are very light, slightly feathered at the butt, and with a pronged iron head. By themselves they would be almost useless in hunting buffalo and eland and other big antelopes. But a deadly poison was plastered about the head, which quickly killed the wounded beast. This poison was sold to the Tumbuka by Biza traders who came from the Mchinga plateau. Stalks of it were sewn together like a mat, and two mats were bought for a small elephant tusk. When a buck was killed with a poisoned arrow, the flesh about the wound was cut off and was not eaten. But if some hungry person did partake of the poisoned flesh I do not know that any more evil effect followed than that he felt a most bitter taste in his mouth.

The great ceremonial hunting took place when elephants were sought. The chief hunters were famous men, and had each his own hunting-ground, into which no others could trespass. They possessed certain occult powers which were necessary for killing an elephant.

When a hunt was decided on the expert called together his band of men, and inoculated them with his secret medicine, and gave them also something to drink. A fire was kindled, and after certain roots were thrown on it the weapons of all the hunters were held over the smoke till they had drunk it in and were blackened. This was done

that the wounded animals might be powerless to run away.

When all the preparations for the expedition were made, and sacrifice had been offered to the spirits of the dead, the chief hunter charged the villagers who remained that there must be no quarrelling, or immorality indulged in within the village. None were to leave their homes to visit other places, but all were to remain quiet and law-abiding lest the game disappear, or turn in anger and rend the hunters. As he left the village he blew a loud blast on a little horn he carried, and shouted back to the people, "Let those who have gone before, go in peace; but let him that utters my name die." The curse was to prevent any talk about the projected hunt lest the game hear about it and hide away.

When the expedition had arrived at the hunting-ground and had built their sleeping shelters, the expert blew again upon his horn, and said, "Let him that seeks me, go far away." This was meant for lions and such-like dangerous enemies. Then he stuck a number of little horns, with magic medicine in them, into the ground about the sheds, and all around his own sleeping-place, telling the men that no wild beast could cross these horns. Indeed, so strong was their faith in the protective power of this magic, that frequently the men slept without sheds or fire.

Throughout these days of travel and sport the chief hunter lived alone, slept and ate by himself, and was held in great reverence. Those who accompanied him had to guard most carefully their moral conduct, and husbands had no intercourse with their wives.

When the elephants were sighted, a convenient tree was chosen, and into this the expert mounted, taking with him one or two very heavy spears. These were the only spears of the tribe. They had a broad and very sharp iron head,

which was fixed to a long heavy stick. The men now scattered themselves, and began to drive the elephants towards the tree with the noise of drums and shouting. This was a work of immense danger, and frequently some of them were killed by the enraged beasts. The hunter remained alone on the branches of the tree, and when an elephant passed below he drove his spear with great force and precision into its back behind the shoulder. Should the animal fall there the hunter was in considerable danger, for the other elephants might come up and tear the tree to pieces, and a fearful death would follow. So there was much rejoicing when the wounded beast moved off, and chose to die at some little distance and alone.

When the elephant was dead, the hunter was placed on its body, and was washed with medicine. Then an ear was cut off, and they went with it to the nearest *msoro* tree, and offered it in worship to some ancestral spirit. The other ear and certain tit-bits were next cut, and were given to the hunter, being placed in the great basket in which his medicines and utensils were carried. The tusks were next cut out, one becoming the property of the hunter, and the other of his men.

Now news was sent to the village to call out the people to bring home the vast treasure of meat. When it was all brought in, beer was prepared to drink with the meat, and great pots were set on the fire to boil the flesh. Next morning the beer and the meat would be ready. But before they partook of it, a log of a certain medicinal tree was drawn to the village, cut up and pounded, and then set on the fire. The hunters stood over the fire and inhaled the smoke, that they might increase their skill in the hunt. Then with much dancing the feast began, continuing as long as men and women were able to eat and drink, and being resumed when sleep and more violent dance had made room for more.

Meanwhile, the hunter sat alone on a mat like a great chief, and his men when they came near bowed their heads to the ground, and rolled on their backs, calling him a lion, and saying, "We are under the authority of the lion."

CHAPTER XIV

DISEASES

ALTHOUGH the adults of the race are on the whole a healthy-looking people, one must not generalize and say that sickness is comparatively uncommon among these Central Africans. It is only the more physically fit who survive. The weakly succumb before the numerous enemies of life, through their complete ignorance of saving precautions. And, indeed, our intimate acquaintance with the survivors dispels a great number of common illusions about the physical condition of the African. His teeth, for example, look so white and perfect against his dark skin, that we are inclined to envy him his set of ivories, especially when we see him tearing up meat, or sweet cane. But a closer examination of the interior may reveal a less ideal condition than one expected to find, and people who have had their front teeth filed, usually come to old age with a yawning cavity where incisors should be. Many a strong-looking carrier may be found to be suffering painfully all through his arduous journey with bilharzia.

Their careless habits of eating and drinking make them peculiarly subject to intestinal and parasitic diseases, and when one examines the history of families the infant mortality is found to be very great. I once made a census of a number of families in several villages, and found it no uncommon history for a woman to have borne as many as seven children, only two of whom attained to manhood or womanhood. The lack of knowledge of the simplest laws of

hygiene, and of care of children, led to this serious infant mortality. To-day, however, the increased knowledge, and better feeding, and greater sobriety of the people are largely decreasing the death-rate, and it is an undoubted fact that the wives of Christian monogamists have now larger families of living children than were ever heard of among polygamists.

In a native's eyes there are, at least, five explanations for sickness and pain. First, and least frequently, there are natural causes ; then there is the action of sorcerers by magic and poison ; the retributive effects of the sins of others, and the work of poison ; unfriendly spirits ; demon-possession. First, then, let us consider their treatment of diseases which have risen from natural causes, and I do not mean to include in this class only those whose cause is known, but those also which are recognized as having arisen without the interference of any magical agency. Although the native is slow to connect cause and effect, he is not so childish as to be unable to recognize that the violent sickness with which he has been seized may have arisen from poisonous mushrooms he has just eaten, or that the gnawing pain in his mouth comes from a decayed tooth. And other common illnesses such as fever, or pneumonia, will not necessarily be traced to magical influences, but may be simply accepted as the act of God.

There is an immense pharmacy of herbal medicines known to the natives. Every intelligent native can find some medicinal herb, and when a relative is taken ill, his first duty will be to seek a root which he thinks may be efficacious. But should the sickness take a prolonged or well-defined form, he goes to the specialist for this disease. There are great numbers of people, who are not doctors, but who retain as a family secret, the knowledge of medicinal roots for particular afflictions. One man may know the specific for pleurisy, another for epilepsy, another for madness.

Some have the secret by which the production of female progeny can be secured, and so on for all the ills and all the longings to which the native is heir. Most of these herbal medicines have strong purgative or emetic effects, and although I am quite ignorant of their nature, I am bold enough to say that they are not all unproductive of good. One time when my calves were very sickly with worms I called in a local chief who had a reputation for understanding cattle diseases, and asked him to treat them. He dug up a root from a near ant-hill, pounded it down, and boiled it in water, then he gave each calf a big draught of the medicine, not neglecting to squirt a mouthful under the tail and into the ears. The external douche was not the effective operation certainly, but by the evening each one of the calves was cured.

There are a few men who are skilful bone-setters. They use a piece of reed mat as a splint, and tie the broken limb firmly into position. I have seen cases of good recovery, both of men and of cattle, under their treatment.

Tooth-pulling is a very painful operation. The decayed tooth is knocked out with a little axe and hammer, if it will not yield to the pull of a string. No wonder that the white man's forceps are very popular, and that he who carries a set of tooth-pulling instruments need never lack patients. But besides the non-professional specialists, there is a considerable band of " doctors " in the land, who earn their living by the treatment of disease. They do not pretend to be able to treat everything, but each man has an established reputation for the cure of a particular set of diseases, and when these arise he is sent for to try his art. He must not, however, press his medicines on any one who has not first asked for them, for should he either for mercenary or philanthropic motives treat some sick person who has not called him, he will be in grave danger of being charged with sorcery or with poisoning, should any evil results follow his treatment.

The professional doctors depend for their success on mental influences as well as the power of their medicines. Songs and dances, incomprehensible incantations, and strange dress, clever tricks of sleight-of-hand which have nothing to do with the disease, are all used to inspire the patient with confidence in his physician; and I rather fancy that a doctor's reputation grows more by the power of these externalities, than by the number of cures he effects.

The second explanation of disease is magic, and when the sickness does not immediately yield to simple drug remedies, this is the first cause that is sought. All natives are supposed to have magical powers over their neighbours should they choose to use them, hence when enmity has arisen between men, one of the natural thoughts of the afflicted man is that he has been bewitched by his enemy. No contact with each other is necessary for effective magic. A man's footprints might be stabbed or cupped by his enemy, and in the morning he would be found in his hut bleeding from wounds, or blistered and dying. Another might come secretly in the night and cut the verandah posts of his enemy's house in a certain way, and next morning the man's body would be found cut and wounded in a similar fashion. The commonest method of bewitching was by getting possession of some discarded part of the body. Hence, precautions were taken to conceal whatever might give an enemy opportunity to hurt the owner. When a man or woman had the hair clipped, or shaved, all the hair was gathered and hid in deep ant-holes, lest a sorcerer should find it out and knowing the owner do him harm. The sorcerer might mix the hair with medicine and cause people to drink it in their sleep by some occult power, or he might curse the mixture saying, "If this hair is So-and-so's let him die, but if not let him recover." And such a curse was most potent. Chiefs used to get their hair cut by a slave who was sent to throw it away in some secret place; but sometimes the slave had a

cause of enmity in his heart, and before he hid it, he would curse the hair, and the chief would immediately fall sick, and perhaps die.

When finger-nails were cut, the clippings were hidden away or buried in the earth lest an enemy should find them and slice them up, causing the owner's death. When a man's tooth is pulled, he is careful not to leave it lying about, also to cover with earth all the blood he spits out, lest someone use these parts of himself for evil magical purposes.

So also there was great magical power in expectoration, and should any of a man's saliva fall on the body of another, serious charges were apt to be made which could only be removed by humble apologies and payment. Food spitten out might also be taken and cursed, and the man who had rejected it become seriously ill. When one eats on the path even, what is left over is hidden far away in the bush, lest an opportunity of doing evil be given to some sorcerer.

So numerous are the methods by which an enemy may bewitch another, that sudden sickness and inexplicable diseases were usually suspected of being the work of some unfriendly villager; and should the sick man or his friends make a definite accusation of magical influences, there was no other escape for the suspected man than by going through the poison ordeal to prove his innocence.

Another cause to which death is often attributed, is poisoning, and the native to whom the powers of the sorcerer are very real, whether they be exercised by magic or by some deadly poison, gives one name (*ufwiti*) to these two very different means of harming another. This is a point which ought to be clearly understood. The Europeans are inclined to translate *ufwiti* by the one word sorcery, and to condemn it absolutely. Indeed, to charge another with *ufwiti* is a criminal offence, under British rule, and I know one intelligent boy who was imprisoned for a long period because he had brought before the magistrates another

whom he charged with being an *mfwiti*. He was told, and rightly told, that the Government was determined to put down these constant charges of sorcery which were doing so much harm in the villages, but what his charge really amounted to was that his brother had died after having been given some meat by another who had a long-standing quarrel against him, and he had grave suspicions that the meat was poisoned. There is no doubt that one or two very deadly poisons are known to the people. The two which are most dreaded are the gall of the crocodile, and of the hartebeest. When either of these beasts is killed, great and public care is taken to put the poison out of the reach of any evilly disposed person. Any time I have shot a hartebeest, my men have always brought the gall publicly to me, and requested me to dispose of it personally. They forbore to hide it themselves lest afterwards a suspicion might be attached to any one of them, that knowing where it was, he had returned and dug it up.

These poisons were usually put in the beer of any one who was to be killed, and the death, in great agony, occurred in a few hours. That some people were wicked enough to kill their fellows by these deadly poisons I have no doubt. But in the past years, so suspicious are the people, I have scarcely known the death of a chief which has not given rise to serious charges of poisoning, and in one or two cases, some of the accused have been done to death. Without a post-mortem examination, it would be impossible to prove the charges, and I believe that possibly in almost none of them was there any serious ground for the accusation.

Another magical cause of disease is that retribution which comes upon people for their own sins, or the sins of others. The sin of adultery is supposed to be particularly dangerous to the health of the village. Deadly pestilences have come into a community, and when the cause was sought out, it was traced to an act of immorality of this

nature, and the whole village suffered. But it was the husband of the unfaithful woman who was most liable to become ill; while a husband by a similar offence brought great danger to his pregnant wife. Two or three instances may illustrate the popular idea of the physical evils which follow from unfaithfulness.

A Christian man was recently accused seriously of adultery by the women of his village. When we came to inquire into the case, we could not find any one who could date the sin or name the person wronged. No definite grounds for the charge nor evidence of any kind was forthcoming, yet the accusation was seriously believed. Further inquiry led to the revelation of the whole ground of the accusation. His wife, in advanced pregnancy, was out gathering firewood, and twice during the day stumbled over a stone and was in danger of hurting herself. Some women who had seen her stumble at once exclaimed that her husband, who was from home, must have fallen into sin. And for this magical reason the man was hounded from the village, and some would have hounded him from the Church also.

I was once called out very suddenly to the paramount chief's village with the alarming news that he was dying, and would possibly be dead before I got there, and serious suspicions were held as to the cause of his sickness. When I got to his head village I fully expected to find the public mourning in progress, and a severe civil commotion, but was relieved to find him still alive, and suffering from diphtheria, apparently. While he lay expecting death, his chief induna was holding an inquiry in the village, to which every one of the chief's scattered wives was called. He was making strenuous attempts to discover what wife had been unfaithful, and thus had caused the chief's illness. So great was the alarm over the serious sickness, and so strong the faith that in confession was the only hope of recovery, that one of the chief wives confessed to adultery.

She was driven forth from the village, for the death penalty could no longer be administered. And with a great load off his mind the induna proceeded to doctor his master. He succeeded in extracting the membrane from the chief's throat by manipulating an oiled feather, and had the satisfaction of seeing him recover, and resume his usual life of daily debauchery.

But the consequences of unfaithfulness do not fall on others only, the poor woman who has sinned is likely to have a dreadful time at childbirth. Difficult labour was so invariably regarded as the result of unfaithfulness, that to say that a woman died in childbirth is to say she died an evil person (*muheni*). As hour after hour of distress followed on, the old women gathered into the poor sufferer's hut, and began to urge her to confess her sin that she might have a safe delivery, until at last in the agony of her need, and to save herself from her accusers, and from threatening death, she divulged the names of those with whom she had sinned. And though her accusation might be the untruth of hysteria, with no actual basis of fact, there was no disputing her confession. The accused were already guilty, and must pay.

When sickness is persistent, and no natural cause is known, and no magic suspected, a doctor is called in to discover what spirits have been offended, and have caused the disease. By means of his divining-stones and shells he is soon able to name the angry shade, and the friends immediately proceed to propitiate him with prayer and offerings of beer and foodstuffs.

If all the worship of the spirits has not brought back strength to the sufferer, a doctor of demons (*virombo*, wild creatures) is called to try to exorcise those that have taken possession of the invalid. Now there are several different kinds of demons, which are named after certain tribes, and each type of demon only responded to his own par-

ticular dance and dress. It was therefore the work of the exorciser to discover what kind of demon possessed the invalid, and this he did by a series of changes in dress and dance. He would first enter the crowded hut dressed in skins only, and rattling his drum to a particular beat. If there was no response he went out and returned dressed with ribbons bound about his head and hanging down behind, and danced in quick gyrations. If the demon still refused to respond, he entered again clothed with jennet skins, dancing with a shaking of his abdomen, and the muscles of his body, and so on. When the appropriate dance and dress appeared, the sick man became like one possessed. He called for a dress like that of the dancer, and forgetting his weakness, rose from his mat and danced with the exorcist, imitating his steps. The people in the neighbourhood became possessed by the same dancing mania, and they gyrated or leapt about with the sick man, until perspiration poured down his body, and at last he had to desist from sheer weakness. That was the last and final cure. If the exorcism of the demon did not stay the sickness, nothing more could be done, death alone could release the sufferer.

CHAPTER XV

BIRTH TO DEATH

WHEN children are born to the Tumbuka there is a double welcome to the girl baby. One cry of joy is given by the women in the hut when they see that a boy is born, but two cries when the babe is a girl, for they say the boy is but a "single arrow," and death in war awaits him. And should he live till marriage, he is but as a pot that breaks, for he must leave the village of his parents, and build in the village of his wife. But the girl will remain, and it is she who will increase the parental village.

When twins or lame or sickly children were born, the father and mother were sent out of the village, and a shed was built for them in the bush. There they had to live for two months, the mother was not allowed to cook food for her husband, or to touch salt, for the consumption of food prepared by her would cause the husband and his fellow-villagers to suffer from swollen legs. The man must undertake all culinary operations till the time of purification be over, if no friendly woman in the village should offer to do this service for him. When the time of seclusion was over the parents and child returned to the village, and at the cross-roads they broke a pot given them by one of the midwives, and then entering the village the mother's head was shaved and medicine given her. Afterwards she cooked porridge into which some magic herbs were introduced, and this was divided out to their fellow-villagers. Thus the

spell of the birth was broken, and social intercourse re-established. Among the Tumbuka the twin children were carefully reared, but by other tribes they were exposed in the bush. They were supposed to be peculiarly subject to jealousy, so no one was allowed to give a present or do a kindness to one unless he was prepared to do it to the other. Their lives were as one. Nor might an angry villager strike one, because of the pain his blow would give to the other.

Some of the people deny that children whose upper teeth were cut before the lower, were abandoned, but others confess that this was the custom. I have myself seen the body of a little child lying dead on the sand of a river, where it had been laid by its mother because of this abnormal tooth-cutting. Should a mother die, there was little hope for her infant. Sometimes a kind matron braved all possible charges, and reared the orphan at her own breast. But more frequently the complication of accusations that arose on the death of a mother made it dangerous for any one to help the little creature, until it was too late, and the child was interred with its mother.

A boy once came to me to help him out of somewhat serious difficulties he was in. His story was as follows. His wife had given birth to a child, and a few days after had died. The relatives at once gathered and demanded heavy payments. He had been learning in school, and had received some little enlightenment, and thought he ought to resist their extortions. "It was the act of God," he declared. "I am not responsible for my wife's death." But, as her husband and the father of the child, they maintained he was. So they refused to help him to bury the corpse until full payment was made, and, of course, no unrelated villager would help, and become party to the quarrel. The youth was either strong-minded or stingy, and refused to pay. So he went alone and dug a grave, and carried the corpse to the mouth of the grave. Then he looked on his little

sickly babe. It was crying for lack of nourishment, for no one would mother it, and it would soon be dead. So he took the little thing and rolled it in the mat with the dead mother, and buried the two together. As he lowered the mat into the grave he could hear its cries.

When I rose up in horror at his story, he only answered, "But the child would have died of starvation in a short time. No one would feed it."

Ordinarily children are not weaned until they are two years old at least, and during all that time the wife is taboo to her own husband. From the first day of the baby's life the mother's milk is supplemented with a thin gruel, which is thrust upon the baby in no tempting fashion. The nurse or mother holds the child on her knees, and laying the hollowed left hand under the child's mouth, fills it with gruel. The air passages are choked with the uninviting mess, and with every struggle and cry the child makes, it is compelled to gulp down a mouthful. It is a strong testimony to the magnificent digestions of these little Africans that their stomachs do not revolt against the food thus thrust upon them. Wherever mothers are congregated, there are sure to be numerous babies, and from one at least there seems to be continually going up a crying, and gurgling, and gulping, which indicate that a baby is being fed.

Mothers carry their children on their hips when they take them up for a little. But all day the child is, in lieu of perambulator or tempting cot, bound to the mother's back, by a goatskin, the legs spread out on either side. With this perpetual burden the woman pounds her maize, and hoes her garden, and goes through her most violent labours. When the cold evening winds are blowing she sits down for a gossip with her neighbours, and unlooses the babe who has been perspiring all day in the goatskin, and who now crawls about without a stitch to warm it. No wonder that lung diseases frequently carry off the tender little things.

As soon as the children are able to run about by themselves, they enjoy a great deal of freedom. The girls soon separate themselves from the boys, and have their own occupations and amusements. They play at pounding maize, and have their toy mortars. They follow their mothers to the well, and practise balancing mealie cobs, or little dishes on their heads. They have their crude dolls, and bind them on their backs as they themselves were once bound. And when the cool of the evening comes they dance together, with pretty rhythm, and sing their simple songs.

Boys are not more than four or five when they begin to follow the others who herd the goats all day in the bush. It is a merry boyish time for them. In the open glades they erect mimic huts and kindle fires, at which they cook their stolen or captured food. They set up neat traps for birds, and field mice, and often have a nice little feast of their spoil. They have toy bows and arrows which do not kill, but give them good practice; sometimes, however, they have a stand-up fight, not with fists, but with more dangerous weapons, stones and knobkerries. A goodly number of men carry with them through life ugly scars on their heads, or blindness in an eye, which they got in the fights when they were herds.

When a boy reached puberty his parents sent an old man to give him advice about the conduct which a good citizen should maintain. There were no particular ceremonies observed in his case. But he now began to associate with bigger boys, and to herd the cattle.

A girl at that period was subjected to a prolonged ritual, with numerous fixed rules of ceremony. For a week she was shut up in a house and not allowed any contact with village life. Younger girls were admitted to sit with her for a time, and she was often found weeping, for she saw the sorrows and burdens of motherhood approaching, and all the simple joys of her childhood disappearing. After a week she was allowed

to come out occasionally and sit under the eaves of the hut. But should any grown person pass near she had to hide her head with a cloth, and not look on him.

On the first days of her seclusion her body was rubbed daily with a red powder made from the iron scum of stagnant pools. And at the end of the week the red dust was cleaned off, and her body was painted with the grey of ashes or white flour, to show that she was now clean. The old women who controlled the ceremonies then took her to the river to wash, and anointed her body with a red mixture, and shaved the hair on the top of her head. Then she was mounted on the shoulders of one of the women who carried her through the village in procession, and danced with her among the huts. The young girl wriggled about on her human throne with coy grimaces, and the people brought to her little presents of beads.

She was then taken to her hut and strictly instructed by the old women. The commandments they gave her were the moral code of the tribe, and many of them showed not a little sense of what constitutes a good woman. Here are some of the laws.

Secrecy is evil. Men hate cruelty and love kindness. Lies destroy a village. Do not despise your husband : cook for him if he is hungry. Tend carefully your father-in-law and mother-in-law in their sickness. Theft is wrong. Slothfulness is wrong. Don't give your husband uncooked porridge. Reverence the old.

Great regard was paid to these instructions of youth, and the parents felt that the future character of their daughter depended on her obedience to their commands. Should she prove rebellious, the women were sent back again to repeat their precepts. They stuck a needle into the pupil's body till the blood flowed, and then they reiterated with more particularity all that they had already said.

Among other Central African tribes it was a common

practice for a girl to be espoused to a husband when she was still a child, and for the two to cohabit. But this practice does not seem to have been allowed among the Tumbuka. A marriage engagement might indeed be made, but the couple did not live together until six months or a year after the girl had come to womanhood. Among some sections of the tribe the interval was even as long as two or three years.

There were certain prohibited degrees of marriage. People of the same clan name were not supposed to marry, but cousins who were children of a brother and sister might. When a man died his brother had the first claim upon his widow, and sons also might inherit their father's widows, but not their own mother.

When a young man cast eyes upon a likely maiden, and wished to take her to be his wife, he first went to her parents and spoke with them. They did not give their consent at once, but told him they would make inquiries, whereupon they proceeded to find out the clan of the lover, and whether he was a diligent worker, and likely to keep their daughter in comfort. If the results of their inquiries were satisfactory, the girl was asked whether she loved the young man and was willing to be his wife. When she saw that her parents were favourably disposed to him she probably assented.

The lover then sent on ahead a present to his future father-in-law, perhaps a hoe, or some beads, and asked if he might come to see his sweetheart. Consent was at once given, and when he arrived in the village, the girl, accompanied by many of her friends, went to the hut where he was staying and spent the evening in talk.

The engagement was now fixed, and the man had to come and build a house in his father-in-law's village, and when the rains fell, help him to hoe his garden. Then after all these preliminary arrangements were completed, messengers were sent to call him to the marriage. On his arrival he was placed on a mat along with his wife in front of their house,

and the villagers gathered round to dance before them. Great quantities of beer had been prepared beforehand, and the dance was considerably stimulated by heady potations. While the people danced before the blushing couple, they brought them little presents of beads, and all who gave a wedding present were entitled to the privilege of bestowing some advice upon the couple. One man would come with a string of light-coloured beads, and flinging them on the mat praise the hospitality and kindness he had received from the girl in the past, and commend her to her husband. But another might come with a string of dark beads, should the girl have a bad reputation, and upbraiding her for her churlishness to him in the past fling the beads far into the village. The bridegroom also had to make further presents to his father-in-law. When the evening fell the bride and her sister stood by the door of the husband's hut with a little basket in their hand, and as the husband passed into the hut he laid a hoe or beads in the basket as a gift to his bride, and again laid another offering on the mat before they sat down together. The old women now gathered in the house till it was packed full, and then they all let loose their wisdom and experience on the newly-wedded pair. Volumes of advice on their duties to one another were given, and as each old woman spoke the bride and bridegroom bowed themselves in silence in respect to her age and wisdom.

Then all left the hut, and dancing was continued throughout the night. In the morning the husband emerged first, and was greeted by his friends. And if he were satisfied with his wife and all the arrangements the marriage was now complete, and he went out of the village with a bow and arrow, and aiming at a tree, transfixed it hard with his arrow. So would he treat anyone who dared to rob him of his wife.

When the husband and wife began housekeeping together there was a little ceremony of eating out of the same dish,

TOM-TOM

The great drum which used to be beaten through the long night-dances. It is made of a hollowed tree, closed at both ends with ox-hide, and laced with small hide-strips. It is now used to call to worship.

A CONVALESCENT HOME

This is a temporary shelter built for those who are suffering from infectious diseases or for mothers who have borne twins.

but it was accompanied with some difficulty, for the wife may not see her husband's mouth when he eats, nor may the husband see his wife's. So they sat together, back to back, and ate in this unsociable fashion. Chiefs also seemed to have a strange shyness about their eating. They were never seen by their people conveying food to their mouths. When a dish was brought to them they retired behind a house, or entered some empty hut and ate alone. But after the first burst of conjugal sociability, husband and wife had no need to turn their backs on one another, for the husband ate always along with the men and boys of the village, and the woman took what scraps she could find along with females only.

The husband now became a member of his wife's village, and should he wish, after some years, to return to his own people, he could only do so by presenting a slave or a cow to his parents-in-law to redeem himself. But his children could never be redeemed. Though they might go with him and his wife to his old home, yet when they grew up they had to return to the village of their maternal grandparents, and build there as members of that community. So long as the husband lived in the village of his parents-in-law he was surrounded by a good many taboos which must have restricted his action considerably. He could not call his new parents by their name, nor could he eat with them. He was bound to show them an obedience and respect which were not demanded of him by his own father and mother, and should he treat them harshly, he would be driven from the village, and compelled to leave behind him wife and children.

On the other hand, were he dissatisfied with his wife, especially with her negligence in cooking, he could repudiate her. This divorce did not take place in private, but before the assembled villagers and their chief. The husband repudiated his wife by taking an arrow and sticking it into

the ground. An arrow was his sign of jealous possession of his wife. Should any one wrong her, he was at liberty to shoot the culprit. Now, when he repudiated the woman, he stuck the arrow upright in the ground, as a sign that whosoever would might have her, and he would take no revenge.

From the above remarks it will be seen how much more care was exercised over the well-being of a woman than over that of a man. She was the greatest possession of a village, and all hopes of increase rested in her. This is even more dramatically illustrated in the ceremonies which accompanied the death of a woman. If a person were dying, women alone nursed the patient. No recently married person was allowed to enter the house, or sit by the fire. When death came in the case of a man messengers were sent to his friends to tell them of his death, but they took no present with them. And when the mourners gathered there was no wailing. The brother of the dead man would perhaps be in a state of physical collapse with grief, but he made no other sound than that of a suppressed sobbing, and all the other villagers were silent. The great public wailing over the death of one of either sex is a habit which has recently come in with the Ngoni, and even in the case of a woman's death, it was only the women mourners who wept. The men controlled themselves and sat in silence.

On the occasion of a woman's death it was the recognized custom to receive the news with murderous anger. The messengers were dispatched to the parents and friends carrying with them a hoe or a fowl, for if they came empty-handed they would be in danger of being killed. When they announced their sad news they laid down their gift, and fled for their lives. The husband and his friends then had to wait till his dead wife's people arrived and gave permission for the funeral to take place. In this tropical land, it was an urgent necessity that they should come quickly, for the

body soon decomposed ; if for some reason they delayed, and the husband impatiently buried the corpse, he would be charged with murdering his wife, and trying to get her body out of the way.

When the woman's relatives approached the village they rested on the path at some distance, and the husband sent another gift to them, and asked them to come on. After they had entered the village with loud weeping, the husband told them of the sickness and death of his wife. They listened in silence, and made no reply, but immediately withdrew to the bush. When they had gathered together there they sent a message to the husband's people to bring out the corpse and hang it on a tree, that they might fight together and die beside their dead relative. And if the husband was a poor man, unable to make sufficient payment there was no remedy but to go out and fight with bows and arrows, and several were sure to be killed. Had he the means, however, to make some offering of propitiation, he called the relatives to come back and talk the matter over. They then returned, and sitting down opposite the house where the corpse was, stated their demands. Possibly they would not be satisfied until one or two slaves were given over to them, or perhaps a tusk of ivory.

Permission was now given to prepare the grave, and to dress the corpse. The body was laid out on the mat on which death had taken place, and was washed with water and anointed with oil, and dressed in all the clothes which the owner wore. It was then rolled up in the mat and the mat tied. All these preparations were made by the *bazukuru*—friends who had performed the last offices to the dead. To them great respect was paid, and they could claim what they pleased of the possessions of the dead woman. No one would refuse them what they demanded lest the shade of the departed punish them for their stinginess to the *bazukuru*.

At the funeral there were three classes of interested

mourners. The *bazukuru* were chief, and it was they who carried the corpse forth, and placed it in the grave. The *bachimhwe* (hyenas) were those who dug the grave. And the *zinkoswe* (certain relatives, go-betweens) stood by the side of the grave looking on, and directing the operations. Should the ground prove hard, and difficult to dig, operations were stopped, and a "doctor" proceeded to discover why the spirits of the dead hindered their work. Perhaps he would disclose that one was digging who had been at enmity with the deceased, and then he was summarily driven forth from among the mourners, and work proceeded apace.

When all was ready the *bazukuru* brought forth the corpse not by the door, but by a hole broken through the wall of the hut, and placed it in the grave lying on its side, the face towards the west, and the head towards the north, the direction from which tradition says the tribe originally came. All the dishes, pots, clothes, and articles of personal use belonging to the deceased were buried with him. But no metal goods were buried, whether hoes, or arrows, or brass ornaments. It was feared that these would give the ghost opportunity to return with anger to hurt the friends. The near relatives then took pounded cinders and cast them into the grave, that they might not chatter in their sleep, or death come to them. And then all pushed the earth back into the hole. When a child was buried the chief mourner took hold of the parents and bowing their heads to the ground rubbed their foreheads on the earth, and the mother pushed the first dust into the grave with her elbows, while all her children cast in ashes.

In a few minutes the grave would be filled in by the combined effort of the mourners who pushed the earth back into the hole with their hands. Stones and logs and thorns were laid on top of the mound to protect the grave from hyenas, and branches of trees were planted round it. Baskets

and pots, broken up, were laid over all and an offering of foodstuffs. Some of the surrounding tribes had the cruel fashion of killing a slave and placing him in a sitting posture over the mound with a bow in his hand, and an upright stake driven through his body, but this custom was never observed among the Tumbuka.

After the funeral all those who had taken part in it went to the river to wash, the *bazukuru* performing their ablutions first. When they had cleansed themselves they washed the hands of those who had helped to fill the grave, and the entire bodies of those who had handled the corpse.

They then set out to the village, but, before they arrived, a "doctor" who had been called, met them on the path and kindled a great fire into which he had put some roots, and each one of the mourners passed through the flames of the fire. A basket of food of the consistence of gruel was also brought from which all drank together, spitting out a mouthful on the ground.

The chief mourners now returned to the village, and the women slept within the hut of the deceased, but the men built a leafy shed beside it and slept there. All lay upon leaves, and not on the usual mat. The *bazukuru* lay apart, and lived apart. They ate from a broken dish, and by themselves. Should any one step over their feet as they lay down, or pass behind their back, it was considered a serious offence, from which he could only clear himself by the payment of a fowl. For several days this isolation of the mourners was maintained, until all the distant friends had arrived to express their sorrow. As these people approached the house of mourning, the women within the hut started wailing, and received the female sympathisers. The men sat down without, and heard all the details of the sickness and death.

When the period of seclusion was over beer was brewed, and during its preparation, dances were held all day and all

night. Then, when it was ready, the mourners went to the grave, and digging a hole in the earth, poured a portion of the beer into the hole as an offering to the dead. They then returned home, broke down the sheds, swept the village, and with much beer drinking and dancing, returned to their own places of abode. But the friends of the deceased remained under several taboos for nearly a year. They were not allowed to shave their heads, or to live with their wives, or to marry. Any bold person who broke this taboo was subjected to a heavy fine.

At the end of the long mourning great feasting and dancing were held, and the heads of the friends were shaved. A procession was made to the grave with foodstuffs, and one of the number taking a pot of beer in his hand poured it on the grave and prayed to the spirit of the dead thus: "We have come to bring you, our friend, back to the village. Come and visit your family. See I give you this food that you may drink." And then they returned to the village spilling meal on the path as they went, and placing a pot of beer in the hut of their dead relative. Next morning, if they found that the field mice had scattered the meal on the path, or that the beer in the house had risen, and frothed over the sides, they concluded that the shade of the departed had heard their prayer, and had returned to live with them in the village.

The above description refers to the burial rites of an ordinary Tumbuka freeman. Slaves were not so reverently used, for their bodies were generally cast into the bush without burial, and left to be preyed on by vultures and hyenas. The same fate awaited epileptics and lepers, even though they were freemen. In certain details the stereotyped ritual differed in the various clans. All corpses were laid on their right side in the grave, but the direction of their heads depended on the land from which the forefathers of the clan came. Those who came from Mpoto lay with

their heads to the east; those from Kamanga with their heads to the north; those from Zambwe with their heads to the north-west, and so on.

The foodstuffs, too, which were laid on the grave varied according to the favourite diet of the deceased. For the people thought of the life beyond the grave as very like that which men lived on earth, with much the same likes and dislikes, and occupations and sports.

The death of a wife was always a most serious matter for the husband, but he also found himself severely entangled if too many of his children were dying. Then he became an object of hatred to his parents-in-law. He was not increasing their wealth in children, and the blame for the high mortality was laid at his door. A formal charge was at last brought against him, and he was compelled to pay perhaps one or two slaves to his wife's people, and when this was done an immediate reconciliation took place. But if he were too poor a man to make sufficient payment he became the slave of his own wife, and she used him as she pleased.

Many of the great chiefs were foreigners, such as Chikuramayembe, Chibale, etc., and at their funerals the murderous rites of the surrounding tribes were practised. Then a huge pit was dug for the burial, and a score or two of victims were secured to accompany the spirit of the dead chief. The floor of the grave was spread with ivory, and quantities of cloth. The victims who were to be buried alive were anointed with oil, and clothed in the brightest dresses, for they were going to a beautiful country. Four of the best-loved wives were then put into the grave alive, two to hold the chief's body to their breasts, two others to hold his tobacco-pipes. Then two men were put in to watch over him, and other wives to lie by his side. Quantities of cloth, ivory, and other goods were then laid over them all, and again more victims on the top of this wealth. Then the grave was filled in. As the earth neared the top two more

men were killed and placed on the top, their head and shoulders projecting above the mound. Into their hands were put a bow and arrow, and these gaunt corpses sat over the grave to protect it from any sorcerer with cannibal instincts who might wish to dig up the corpse, and from prowling hyenas. There was only one refuge from this death for the victims who were seized. Should one of them sneeze in the grave, it was believed that the shades refused his company, and he was taken out and released.

CHAPTER XVI

LEGAL PROCEDURE

WHETHER there ever were any constituted authorities among the Tumbuka for judging criminal cases I cannot tell. All the traditions and customs for the prosecution of crime one has been able to root out were evidently established after the tribe had broken up, and men were largely their own judges, acknowledging no recognized authority. Justice could not be obtained within the village, because the social relations of each member of the community were so intertwined. A husband could not get a sentence against his wife for any wrongdoing on her part, because the villagers recognized that to do her harm was to destroy their own village, and hope of increase. When a man had a quarrel with some member of his own village, the custom was to go to some distant village, and calling the elders together, ask them to judge the case. If their decision did not correspond with his desires, he ignored them and went off to a more distant village, where he and his people were entirely unknown, and again asked them to hear his suit. If these also decided against him, he departed and appealed to the final proof of the poison ordeal.

Few citizens were so peaceably disposed as to submit to such a cumbrous, and indecisive procedure, so the general custom was for the aggrieved person to take the law into his own hands, and protect himself by magic medicines, or to use summary methods of reprisal and death. When a

husband suspected the faithfulness of his wife, he got a certain powerful medicine from a "doctor" and hid it in his house. He then told his wife that any one who wronged her would fall and break his back. The wife had absolute faith in this potent charm, so much so, that when the husband died, she would not dare to marry another until the spell was broken. This could only be done by the "doctor" through an elaborate ceremony to which all relatives were called, and after certain herbs had been given them, which they ate together.

A man who had a quarrel with another, might try to shoot him with an arrow, and if he found this impossible, he would proceed to the garden of his enemy, and cutting a branch from a tree, lay it among the foodstuffs. When the enemy came next to the garden he saw the branch lying there, and knew that his garden was closed against him. He dared not enter it, or take foodstuffs from it, or death would be sure to enter his house. The branch might also be laid on his grain store, or beside the tree where he hoped to get his honey. The rooted faith in this magic medicine was a more effective interdict on his handling his food than a squadron of police. So he was compelled to call up his accuser, and ask him why he had doomed him and his children to starvation. The man with the grievance had then to declare his whole cause of complaint, and he would not remove the embargo until full and satisfying payment had been made.

Social enemies were not so tenderly dealt with. For them, the most summary penalties were reserved and that without trial. Men who were suspected of poisoning, were shot by any villager who found opportunity, and no one inquired into the justice of the punishment. When a man became possessed by that form of *ufwiti* which must have been madness with cannibalistic tendencies, retribution soon followed. He was the worst type of sorcerer. He became restless, and

every night left his house and wandered about in the bush. He dug up corpses from the graves and ate them. He danced, naked, among the cattle at night, and did many other unmentionable things. If any one caught him at his sport, he killed him in very cruel fashion, and the body was thrown aside. Neither the avenger nor any of the villagers spoke about the cause of his death, for it was an unmentionable shame to the whole community. But sometimes men were suspected of being *mfwiti*, though no one saw them in the act of their vile behaviour, and then the suspected man was made to drink a strong mixture of poison. After he had drunk it, he was not allowed to sit down until it acted; should he vomit, he proved his innocence, and his accusers had to pay him compensation, but if he died his body was burned in a great fire outside the village, and a heap of stones was thrown over him.

Sometimes thefts occurred in the village, and the culprit could not be detected. Then a "doctor" was called, who on his arrival inquired of the assembled people whether they were willing that death should come to all the thief's family, or would prefer to let their goods disappear. They at once cried out for death to all. So the "doctor" prepared his medicine, and went forth to the cross-roads and poured it out there, praying that this medicine might not harm the innocent, but might follow the guilty man, and kill him, and his wife and children, and his whole race.

Then he went away, asking no payment until the power of his medicine had been proved. Perhaps in a short time a death occurred in the village, and then, while the mourners were still in their sheds, before they had been cleansed, perhaps another member of that same family died, and possibly before the year was out still another. The villagers had now no doubt about the thief. The stricken family was clearly guilty, and they and all their near relations were expelled or killed.

When a man found it impossible to get his quarrel with his neighbour settled, and had no opportunity to kill him, he had resort to a three-cornered method of bringing him to justice. He would go out to the bush, and lying in wait in the long grass, or among the thick scrub, shoot at the first lonely passer-by and kill him. He then retired to a neighbouring hill, and waited for the discovery of the corpse. When he saw that the man's friends had found the dead body, he shouted aloud from his hill-top, "It was I who killed this man. Go and ask So-and-so what is the quarrel he has with me." And so he put them on the track of his grievance.

The relatives of the slain man returned at once to their village and seizing their bows and arrows started out to fight the man to whom they were directed. They possibly did not shed blood, but might seize his sister and return with her to their village. The accused was now compelled to have his case judged that he might rescue his sister. And when it was decided against him, he had not only to pay the man who brought the charge, but also to compensate the relatives of the man who had been treacherously slain on the path by his enemy.

Another method used by the plaintiff, was to go off to another village and ask them to give him a war-party to go out against the village where the accused lived. The head of the village readily agreed to this, for few villages were at peace with one another. The little war-party hid near some frequented path and waited for travellers. When a slave or poor man passed, they sat quiet. But when they saw people of property approaching, they started up and attacked them. Several might be killed, but an effort was made to capture as many women as possible, and these were taken off as hostages. These hostages were most kindly treated. Should any of the women be wronged by a villager, or die in captivity, most serious charges were brought

against the village, and heavy payment was demanded. The assaulted villagers now inquired what was the cause of the attack. They were told that it was because one of their number refused to settle a charge which was made against him. And then there was no help for it but that they go to the village elders and pay up the fine for the original charge, so that their women may be released from captivity.

The delivery over of slaves was a very common method of paying up for charges proved, and was the common compensation paid to the relatives when a wife died. These slaves were not harshly treated, and when the head of a family died, the senior slave in his possession frequently became at once a free man, and the head of his master's family.

When people became very angry in a quarrel they frequently vented their passion in a curse, and these curses were greatly dreaded. Men swore by their fathers and mothers, by lions, and lightning, by bloody fields of battle, and by great rivers, calling on these to pour out their wrath on the person cursed. And, of course, the natives are full of stories of how the curse was soon fulfilled, and the lightning struck a man in the field, or a lion devoured him on the path, or the swollen river carried him to death. To remove a curse it was necessary to call in a "doctor" who knew how to prepare the proper medicine, which is called *mpamba*. Then the curser and the cursed confessed their faults, and worshipped the ancestral spirits, and drank together from the same cup.

In the early days of my stay in this country I once took a sick man into my house to nurse him. Under my crude physicking he made no progress, and one day when I returned home and went to see how he was getting on, I found that neither he nor his friends were in the room. Shortly afterwards I was taking an evening walk near a little glen, when I heard the ringing of iron, and the sound of voices at hand.

I pushed my way quietly through the scrub, and there below me saw my patient and his friends. A "doctor" was standing before them, and they were ringing two axes together. The "doctor" had discovered what was wrong, the sick man was lying under a curse, and now he was engaged in breaking the spell. And this was his prayer:

Doctor: "Mpamba, mpamba" (the magic medicine).
Chorus from the people: "It will arise."

Doctor: "It is growing."
Chorus: "It will arise."

Doctor: "It is going to heaven."
Chorus: "It will arise."

Doctor: "Let the oaths fly away."
Chorus: "It will arise."

Doctor: "Let our friend recover."
Chorus: "It will arise."

Doctor: "Let him have health."
Chorus: "It will arise."

When two men had quarrelled they neither ate together, nor spoke to one another, nor looked at one another. But they might tire of this long enmity and desire a reconciliation. A "doctor" was therefore called, and he prepared his mixtures, and invited all the villagers to come together that they might witness the reconciliation. Then he handed his communion cup to one of the two disputants. From this he drank, and spat out on the ground some of the mixture. Then the other took the cup and did likewise. The quarrel was now over, and the old friendship resumed, and they ate and chatted together as in former days.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WISDOM OF THE PEOPLE

IF you want to know your native, you must hear him talk over the fire at night, for then he lays aside his Europeanized clothes and manners, and his tongue is unloosed, and he prattles on in most frank fashion. So come and sit with me over the village fire and listen to his talk. The stars are bright in the heavens, but there is no moon, and a somewhat chill wind is blowing, so we gather a few sticks together, and lay them over two or three very dry logs, and soon have a blazing fire. A dozen men sit round it when they see the white man is there, and has unbent enough to have an informal talk. The darkness soon removes their shyness, and the white man in his elaborate attire is not visible enough to overawe them. The dancing flames, too, have a most stimulating and merry effect, so talk begins, and the snuff-box goes round, and every one is at his ease. Not until long years have accustomed your ears to the vernacular will it be easy to understand the pith and humour of their stories. Many of the cleverest remarks are cloaked in proverbs, and references to the past, and are meaningless to the new-comer. But if you take pains to arrest some of the sudden phrases whose substantive is wanting, and whose construction is incomprehensible you will begin to find yourself collecting a rich thesaurus of wit and wisdom.

Here are some of the smart sayings and proverbs which you may hear in the course of the conversation.

"*It is a good day when food is set aside.*" On ordinary occasions there is scarcely enough to go round.

"'*Let me see,' stole the guinea fowl.*" Said to a man who wants to look at a thing, which it is feared he may appropriate.

"*He dived into a saucer, and his back showed up.*" This when a man tries to hide his fault by some shallow excuse, which only reveals that he is the culprit.

"*The finger-nails are surfeited.*" A sarcastic remark to show how little food a man found in his dish.

"*He remembers when he fell, he forgot when he was hurt.*" Said of a man who is angry with another for showing him his fault, instead of recognizing the fault.

"*He is preparing relish without salt.*" Of a man who talks on without anything to say.

"*He slices one side only.*" When a chief will not judge squarely the cases brought to him.

"*How can I shoot when the bird sits on my bow-string?*" When a man to be charged is present, or refuses to answer the charge.

"*You have swallowed quickly, the chewing is still good.*" Said to one who has stopped too soon in his story.

"*What shall we do? The axe broke on a castor oil plant.*" It was no fault of ours. The castor oil shrub is very soft wood.

"*Who eats the shells does not forget, but he who eats the bean.*" The man who suffers is the one who remembers.

"*The upper and the lower jaw meet together.*" The arguments are conclusive.

"*The lake is stormy.*" Said of an angry man.

"*You go sideways like a crab.*" "*Trying again and again killed the wild cat.*" "*Too big a vanity burst the bag.*"

"*Laughing finishes the teeth.*" "*I saw with the eyes. The ears are liars.*"

"*Your wisdom is like the mushrooms which come when the porridge is finished*"; i.e. too late to be useful.

Of course, if you want to get a collection of proverbs, and ask the people to repeat those they know, you will get none. For they do not know they have such pithy sayings, and they are not classified under any name.

But try them with guesses, and soon they will be shouting at one another in their eagerness. Unfortunately, some of the riddles have a double *entendre* answer, and some coarse person may give the base meaning and put you and all right-thinking people to confusion. Most of those I have heard are not very remarkable for their wit, but I dare say they are as good as many others given in Britain in our parlour games. Here are some of them, and their answers:

What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening? Answer: A man, who crawls on hands and knees in childhood, walks erect when grown, and with the aid of a stick in his old age.

The pigs slept under the ant-hill. Answer: Ears.

The arrow was shot to heaven, and returned without its shaft. Answer: Flying ants, which in rainy seasons leave their holes, in their first flight, and quickly cast their wings.

A large garden reaped into the hands. Answer: A man's hair.

The house of my mother has no door. Answer: An egg.

The little birds drink at one well. Answer: The roof rafters which meet at the apex.

The roof is leaky. Answer: A basketwork beer-strainer.

When the fun has got pretty noisy, and the guesses pretty stupid, you turn the conversation to story-telling. There

are several kinds of fables that they love to tell. Some of them have running choruses throughout in which the audience join at intervals. Many are of the Brer Rabbit type, and almost invariably tell how the hare, or tortoise, outwitted some person or animal by a clever trick. And the whole moral that runs through nearly every one is, what a clever thing slyness is! I have not the art to turn the humour of their stories into English. It would take a fine gaiety of description to help the Britisher to see the sparkling fun that runs through the whole tale. For when the native tells it, his audience is in a roar of laughter from beginning to end. It is interesting to see how truth and fable run into one another, so that the native scarcely recognizes when he is romancing and when he is telling actual history.

"Does the hyena ever enter your houses, and take away people?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," cried one man. "One day a man I know left his door open at night, and fell sound asleep on his mat. In the middle of the night a hyena entered, and sat down by the fire to warm his back. After she had got thoroughly cosy, she decided to take the sleeper home with her, to feast her cubs. So she took him up and laid him across her back so that he might keep her warm, and she might not catch cold when she went out to the night air. When she got to her hole with him she laid him down beside her cubs and went off to call her husband. And the man awaking lay there in mortal terror, afraid to stir. The cubs looked at him, and licked their lips in anticipation of the feast they were to have. Then they began to divide out his parts among themselves. 'I shall have his eyes,' cried one. 'And I his ears,' cried another.

"But while they were wrangling among themselves for his most delicate tit-bits, the man came thoroughly to his senses, and remembered that he had his knife tied at his belt. So he

quietly unloosed it, and suddenly fell on the impertinent little cubs, and cut the throats of each one of them. Then he crept out of the hole, and swiftly climbed up a neighbouring tree. From this vantage-point he saw the hyenas return, and heard their consternation when they entered the hole and found all their little ones dead, and the man gone. He saw them creep out of the hole, and fly in terror to the bush.

"So he got down from the tree and came dancing home with his knife in his hand, and singing a new song he composed, with the refrain, 'chimai chanc' (my knife). And to-day his name is 'chimai chanc,' you will find him at Lombwa village if you go there."

When he finishes there is a half incredulous laugh, but some shout that they know the man, and it so happened, really. His name is proof of the truth.

I turn them now to real fables, and ask them if they know any stories like our children's fables, telling them the story of Red Riding Hood. Before I have finished, some of them cry they know a story just the same. "Well, tell it," I answer. And here it is.

"There was once a little girl who was very fond of dancing. She lived alone with her grandmother, and every night when the dark fell, she used to go to the nearest village where there was a dance, and sport with the others far into the night. Then she would go home, and knocking at the door of the grandmother's hut she would sing:

> "Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
> It is I, indeed it is I."

(Here the reciter sings this little chorus, and all the listeners join in, going over it twice or thrice.)

"Now there was a wicked hyena that used often to be lurking in the neighbouring bush, looking for a meal that would be easy and safe to snatch. And he heard the little

girl come night by night all alone, and knock at the hut door, and it was immediately opened when she sang :

"Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
It is I, indeed it is I."

(The audience again sings—and so on throughout.)

" So the hyena decided that here was an easy way to get a capital supper, without any fear. And next night when he saw the little girl go off to the dance, he waited till the grandmother was sound asleep, and then he came and knocked at the door, and in his harsh screaming voice he said :

"Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
It is I, indeed it is I."

" But the grandmother started out of her sleep and cried, ' Who's that at the door ? That is not the voice of my little grandchild. It is too harsh.' And she would not open, so the hyena went away disappointed. Later on the girl came herself and knocked, and sang with her little shrill voice :

"Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
It is I, indeed it is I."

" And immediately the old woman rose and let her in. And when she sat down, the grannie said :

" ' I was afraid to-night, granddaughter. Something with a loud, harsh voice came to the door, and sang your song. I fear there is a wild beast near that will kill you if you come home so late every night.'

" ' Oh, nothing can harm me,' said the girl, ' I go every night to dance, and I know the way. Who could do me hurt ? '

" But the hyena, when he found he could not modulate his great voice went off to a mosquito, and asked him to come and sing at the door, and then they would both get inside. To this the mosquito at once agreed.

"So next night they watched the girl go off to her dance, and after waiting some time, they both went to the hut, and the hyena knocked at the door, and the mosquito took up the song in its high pitch :

> "Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
> It is I, indeed it is I."

"Then the old woman hearing the shrill little song thought her granddaughter had returned, and opened the door, and in leaped the hyena, and slew her and ate her up. Gorged with his feast he lay down on her mat, and waited for the return of the girl. By and by there came the knock at the door, and the little song :

> "Open to me, open to me, grandmother,
> It is I, indeed it is I."

"And the hyena rose and opened the door and let the child in. It was dark in the house, for the flames of the wood fire had died down, and there was only a little red glare. So the girl sat down on her mat suspecting nothing. But presently, she saw a splash of something wet on the floor, and she cried, 'Grannie, grannie, what have you spilt?' But the hyena said nothing. Then the girl thinking her grandmother was asleep, rose to wake her. She caught the beast and shook it, saying, 'Grannie, grannie, what's this on the floor?' And the hyena stretched out his strong paws and drew her to him, and killed her."

It is characteristic of the somewhat untender minds of the little Africans that this tragic story is a funny one to them. I once tried to tell it to a little white girl, but there was such a flood of tears at the death of the grandmother, that I had to contrive a miraculous deliverance for the girl, and a resurrection of the grandmother before I could close the story for my little white audience.

When this tale is told, I call now for a story of a hare,

and at once a dozen voices are raised, each one with his favourite fable on the tip of his tongue. So I select one man, and at once he starts off with the preface, "Hare. Hare. There was once a hare that came to the river's bank and there met a great hippopotamus.

"'I can pull you,' cried the cheeky little hare to the river monster.

"'You!' cried the hippopotamus, with a great guffaw. 'I cannot see you, you little creature.'

"'But I am stronger than you, nevertheless, and I'll pull you on to dry land.'

"'Well, let us try,' laughed the hippopotamus.

"'To-morrow I shall grind my meal,' answered the hare; 'and when I have eaten it, I shall be so strong I shall beat you. I shall come on the third day with a rope, and then we shall both pull.'

"'All right,' answered the hippopotamus, 'I'll be ready.'

"So off scampered the hare. Next day he met a great rhinoceros in the bush near the river, and he cried out:

"'I am stronger than you. Let us have a tug-of-war.'

"But the rhinoceros stood amazed, and answered:

"'If I were to try my strength with yours, you would be smashed to atoms.'

"'Well, to-morrow, we shall try,' said the hare.

"On the third day the hare appeared at the river's bank with a great rope, and called on the hippopotamus.

"'Well, are you ready? Here is a rope, tie it to your leg, and I shall go away into the bush with the other end, and stand on that far ant-hill. And when I cry "Pull," you shall pull with all your might, and see who is the stronger.'

"'Very well,' said the hippopotamus, and he tied the rope-end to his great hind-leg.

"Then the hare ran off into the thick scrub, and presently met the rhinoceros at the appointed place.

"'Here we are,' said the hare, 'tie this rope-end to your

hind-leg, and I shall tie the other end to mine, and when I cry from the ant-hill, you are to pull with all your might.'

"So with a monstrous grin the rhinoceros tied the rope to his leg while the hare skipped off to the ant-hill.

"'Now pull,' he shouted.

"The hippo at one end, and the rhino at the other both gave the rope a gentle pull, afraid to hurt their confident little friend. But they were both rather shocked at its immobility, so they pulled a little harder, and then still harder.

"'What's this?' cried the rhino. 'What a power the creature has!'

"'My eye!' groaned the hippo, 'the little thing can pull!'

"So they bent their backs, and put their wills into the tug. The sweat was pouring down the rhino's folded skin. Amazement at the hare's strength, and indignation at the thought of being beaten, battled together beneath his mighty hide. He began to lose ground. His feet slipped, and bit by bit he was pulled and dragged till he got to the water's edge. Then he turned round to look at the little wonder that had beaten him, but no hare was visible, only a huge hippopotamus far out in the shallow water puffing, and blowing, and straining every muscle.

"'Hullo, you there!' cried the rhino, 'what are you pulling?'

"'A hare,' bellowed the straining hippo.

"'You're not. You're tugging me,' screamed the indignant rhino.

"And round the hippo turned, and saw in place of the miraculous hare, a perspiring rhino with a rope tied to his leg."

When this story has been told, I wait to hear a moral fable which teaches some lesson of conduct, and one is soon forthcoming. And here it is:

"Kamzunguzeni went out to hunt along with his son-in-

law. All day they tramped through the wood, but could find no trace of game. At length, when they were utterly wearied with the long search, and disappointment, they come upon the footprint of a buffalo. But the spoor was old, perhaps more than a year old, so it told them nothing of value. The old man turned away disgusted, and was going to make for home, when the son stopped, and cried :

" ' Stand ! I'll slay the beast ! '

" ' We cannot eat a footprint,' said Kamzunguzeni. ' It's more than a year since the buffalo passed here.'

" ' Stand, and see,' cried the son.

" And he took his bow, and putting an arrow on the string, shot with all his power, and the arrow struck deep into the old spoor.

" ' Now run, and cut up the carcase,' cried the young man.

" ' What carcase ? ' asked the father.

" ' There it is ahead of us,' and the young man ran on a few hundred yards, and there was a fat buffalo lying dead with an arrow in its heart.

" ' Ah, me ! what kind of man is this son-in-law of mine ? ' sighed Kamzunguzeni. ' He shoots at an old footprint, and a living buffalo falls down dead.'

" After cutting out some choice pieces of meat, and putting them in their bags, they turned towards home that they might call out their fellow-villagers to carry in the flesh. But the way was long, and they were hungry and faint.

" ' Oh, that we could find some honey ! ' exclaimed the son. And he had scarcely said the word, when a sound of bees was heard in the tree-tops. They peered up and saw them clustering about a hole in a tall tree which had no branches.

" ' However shall we get the honey ? ' said the son. ' There are no branches to help us to climb. And we cannot make a ladder.'

" ' I'll get the honey,' answered the old man.

" He stepped up to the tree, and caught the stem with his hands, and then, oh horror ! his head and shoulders sprang up to the top of the tree while his feet stood still upon the ground. With his hands he gathered all the honey out of the hollow trunk, and then suddenly collapsed like a concertina, his shoulders fitting perfectly to his body.

" They ate the honey together, and felt new men.

" ' Now,' said Kamzunguzeni to his son-in-law, ' you will say nothing to the people at home about what you have seen. Do not even tell your wife.'

" ' All right,' answered the son, ' and you won't tell about my miraculous shoot.'

" So they went home, and called the village to follow them next morning to the dead buffalo.

" That night as the son and his wife were sitting together in their hut, the young man was in a brown-study. ' Alas ! alas ! ' he sighed.

" ' What's wrong ? ' asked his wife.

" ' Oh, nothing.'

" ' Something is wrong. You sighed, alas ! alas ! '

" ' Did I ? I did not mean anything.'

" ' But you did. Tell me what is wrong.'

" ' Well,' said the pressed husband. ' I cannot understand your father. What kind of man is he ? But you must not tell any one.'

" ' Of course, I won't. What's troubling you about my father ? '

" ' Your father's a wonder. We were coming home together very hungry and tired, and we saw some bees buzzing at the top of a tall tree. We did not know how to get at the honey. But your father caught hold of the trunk, and up went his head and shoulders——'

" ' Oh ! oh ! ! oh ! ! ! ' cried the wife, for at these words

the head and shoulders of her husband had parted company with his body, and were floating about at the roof of the hut.

"She flung herself on the floor, and began to wail bitterly and loudly. A neighbour, hearing the death-wail, came hurriedly into the hut, and there saw the husband's upper parts stuck about the roof of the hut, and the wife crying beside his legs on the floor.

"'What's the matter?' shrieked the neighbour.

"'Oh, I don't know. My husband was telling me that he and my father were coming home tired and hungry, and they saw bees buzzing about the top of a tree. And my father caught hold of the trunk, when suddenly up went his head——'

"'Oh! Oh!! Oh!!!' shrieked the neighbour, for suddenly the head and shoulders of the wife had separated from her body and flown to the roof.

"Her cries roused other villagers, who ran out and met her at the hut door, terror-stricken. Within the hut they could see the headless bodies, and they urged her to tell what had happened. She began to tell them, but she had only got to the beginning of the miraculous parting, when suddenly up went her head and shoulders, and floated about above the village. A great wailing immediately arose, and it was heard in a neighbouring village, whose inhabitants came running along to find out what was the matter. Everyone began to tell his neighbour the story, but as soon as he came to the critical part, up went his head, until at last the air was full of floating heads and shoulders.

"At last the only survivor went to Kamzunguzeni's hut, and found the old man there peaceably asleep. He told him what had happened outside, and when he crept out and saw it all with his own eyes, he said, 'You see what comes of telling tales that were not meant to be told.'

"So he got some medicine, and sprinkled it on the dis-

severed bodies, and down came the heads and shoulders, each one to its proper body.

"'Now,' said Kamzunguzeni, 'learn your lesson, and do not go relating to one another secrets you were forbidden to tell.'"

CHAPTER XVIII

MODIFICATIONS

A GOOD deal of what has been related in the previous chapters belongs only to the past. Customs, possessions, religion, are all rapidly changing, and a composite race moulded by foreign influences has taken the place of the prehistoric Tumbuka. In tracing some of the essential changes, one observes the influence of contact with two stronger peoples. The first of these is the Ngoni. Their influence on the Tumbuka has been vital and penetrating, markedly affecting their social and physical characteristics. When they came upon the Tumbuka this tribe had already degenerated into a host of incohesive fragments, and had lost much of that social loyalty and unity which are necessary for the existence of a primitive people. It was welded again by the Ngoni into an orderly and loyal community; but the authority which they acknowledged is that of their usurpers, and gradually they have absorbed a good many of their social customs. At first, the Tumbuka lived in large Ngoni villages, and many of the girls were taken by the masters as wives, and so the blood of the races has been much mixed. The Tumbuka people were dark and of a somewhat weakly and fleshy physique. The Ngoni, especially those of Swazi and Suto origin, were lighter in colour, and with erect, robust bodies, tall and athletic. One sees now a great improvement in the strength and build of the composite race, and along with very dark-skinned people will be seen men and women of

a light chocolate colour. The old markings of large cicatrices on the forehead, and long cuts down the cheek are only to be seen on the old people who were conquered in their youth. All the younger generation have unscarred faces, and large holes in the lobes of their ears.

Many of the more degenerate sports and of the worship-habits of the people were also suppressed by the Ngoni. Some were reckoned to be immoral, and others to express too obtrusively loyalty to the old Tumbuka race, and so were not allowed to be practised. Thus many of the dances were forbidden. The little temples to the spirits of the ancestors were seldom built, but worship was performed after the manner of the Ngoni. Some of the hunting customs were retained as they provided food and wealth for the masters, and all the Tumbuka were taught the use of the spear, and initiated into the practice of disciplined warfare. The smelting furnaces were revived, as the demand for weapons was great. Agricultural instruments such as hoes were made after the fashion of the Tumbuka, for they being the slave population were the tillers of the soil, and the Ngoni being a nomadic people, brought no such implements with them. The main architectural features of the Tumbuka huts were also retained, the Ngoni only introducing a few improvements such as the rolling of the floors into a fine polished surface, the orderly arrangement of the huts around the central cattle-kraal, and the precedence of these huts.

Some of the Ngoni dances were adopted by the entire people. Especially is this the case with the war-dances, and those rhythmical processions, which celebrate the killing of a leopard or a lion. The *ingoma*, a daylight competitive dance, which formed one of the chief exercises of the Ngoni in the cold season, has become a common habit of the whole people, and many of the songs which are sung at it are pure Chitumbuka. The Ngoni marriage customs were also adopted, especially in the matter of dowry payments, and

now it is an uncommon thing for even a Tumbuka girl to be given in marriage until at least two or three cattle have been paid by the bridegroom. There are certain evils in the system such as the bartering of girls to men for whom little love is felt, but who have made an attractive payment of dowry to the parents. But, on the other hand, there are strong safeguards to social morality, which are wholly good in a primitive society, where the Christian conscience and strong social laws are not yet acknowledged. When the price demanded for a girl is high, a considerable obstacle to polygamy is formed, especially for those who are not rich in cattle. The husband who has paid a large sum for his wife reckons her a more permanent and precious possession which he is unwilling to lose. Her premature death may mean not only her loss, and, perhaps, if blame can be attached to him, the payment of further cattle to the parents, but he cannot get another wife without paying for her also. And as a wife may leave her husband, and he have no claim on the dowry, if he has been cruel to her, or neglectful, she too has a strong claim on his clemency and good behaviour by the price which was paid for her.

The old Ngoni custom forbade early marriages. Men were not allowed to marry until they had proved themselves in war; and girls remained single until they were fully developed women. The Tumbuka, on the other hand, married within a year of puberty. At first these early marriages were suppressed by the Ngoni, but gradually the restrictions have relapsed, and the only delay is that occasioned by a man having to work for a sufficient dowry before he can claim a wife. This has meant that the people have reverted to much too early marriages, and the result has not been good.

Possibly the worst habit which the Tumbuka have taught their Ngoni masters, and which has been only too thoroughly learned by them, is that of beer-drinking. When the Ngoni

came into this land they did not drink much, and riotous drunkenness was despised. The young men and girls were very seldom allowed to taste beer, although it was not very heady. The Tumbuka, on the other hand, knew the art of brewing from a small millet seed a very intoxicating beer, which was maddening in its effects. This beer, though not in so strong a form, has now become the drink of the entire tribe, and none are so drunken as the Ngoni masters. Young people and even children are now allowed to drink to intoxication, and practically the only abstainers are those who have come under the influence of the schools. Morals have become distinctly looser than were those of the pure Ngoni. I do not for a moment profess that the Ngoni were a very moral people. Murdering and plundering were the trade of the tribe, but breaches of the seventh and eighth commandments within their own villages were punished with the utmost severity, death, and frequently death by hideous torture, being the common penalty. Parents also maintained a strict control over their children. On the other hand, the social morality of the Tumbuka was very low, and the marriage tie easily broken. The two tribes have reacted on one another in this moral sphere, with the result that, while the composite people may exhibit a distinctly higher type than that found among most Central African tribes, and than that which obtained among the old Tumbuka, they do not nearly approach the strictness of the old Ngoni, and the old men complain to-day that the ancient domestic purity, honesty, and obedience have disappeared before the insidious effects of Tumbuka influence.

In social wealth the Ngoni have greatly enriched the land. When they came the main source of riches among the Tumbuka was the ivory, which they traded to Biza and Swahili merchants for miserably small prices. When the Ngoni arrived they found huge stocks of ivory in some villages, and so ignorant were they of the value of these,

they actually used them as fuel, and thus consumed great quantities. This ignorant extravagance was soon stopped when some Swahili traders appeared in the country and bought what tusks they could find for cloth, but the supply of elephants soon diminished, and to-day they are seldom seen within Ngoniland.

The Tumbuka owned a few cattle and goats, but had no sheep. These cattle were all confiscated by the conquerors. Enormous herds gathered from tribes scattered over the entire line of the Ngoni incursion were introduced, some of these animals being of a much larger breed than the Central African types, and nearly all having the large hump and long dewlap which the Ngoni love to see. Thus a distinct improvement in the breed of cattle was introduced, and the numbers multiplied a hundredfold. Besides these, sheep were also brought from the north, and were then seen by the Tumbuka for the first time.

At first all this increase of stock was simply a gain to the masters. But when the bondage of serfdom ceased to suppress individual rights, the slaves began to accumulate cattle, by their industry, or as dowry for their daughters. And to-day most of the industrious and careful people own goats, sheep, or cattle. Unfortunately this stock has had to fight a constant series of devastating diseases. Rinderpest has swept through the tribe on its irresistible march south, claimed tens of thousands of cattle, and emptied the land of forest game. There is, however, a marvellous recuperative power in Africa in spite of its constant plagues, and to-day there are as many cattle as ever, and the ownership is better distributed.

In the matter of language the reaction of the two peoples on one another is very interesting. Both languages belong to the great Bantu group, and Chingoni or Zulu is more closely allied to the Nyasaland dialects than many of the languages of the central tribes of South Africa, for it belongs

to those races which entered South Africa by an eastern migration, possibly passing through Nyasaland on the way. Indeed, the resemblance between some of the South African languages, especially that of the Karanga and the dialects of Nyasaland, is so close that one must refer these widely-separated people to a common origin at no very distant date in the past.

When one compares Chingoni with Zulu the differences visible are almost entirely those which have come by Tumbuka influences, just as the Chingoni of the Magwangwara on the east side of the Lake has been modified by Swahili influences. The inflections of the nouns and the main formations of the verbs remain unchanged. But the pronoun forms in the verb have altered somewhat to those of the Tumbuka. Thus, they now use *ni* instead of *ngi* for the first person singular, and *mu* instead of *ni* for the second person plural. And, of course, a great number of Tumbuka words have been adopted into the vocabulary.

But if the local dialects have influenced Chingoni, it has in turn greatly enriched them. The Ngoni words for the cattle-kraal, for the war organization, and for the civil powers, and especially their expressions of courtesy have been largely adopted by the local people.

The Tumbuka had no special form of greeting when friends met. They all now have adopted the Ngoni form "We see thee," but with this difference, that the plural pronoun for the person addressed is used. In most Central African languages this is a sign of respect, whereas in Chingoni the singular is equally courteous. In Tumbuka to address a person as "thee" would show a lack of reverence, so when the people salute to-day, they say, "Timwoneni," "We see *you*," There was no common form of thanking among the Tumbuka. The Ngoni, on the other hand, shout "E," or "Yebo" (yes), and the surname of the person thanked,

which is called his thank-name. The Tumbuka have all adopted a thank-name, taking the clan-name of their grandparents, or the country from which they came, as their thank-name. And when thanks are given, or when a man is respectfully addressed, it is by this surname. The old Tumbuka courtesy of rubbing the forehead on the dust, or rolling on the back, before a chief, or other person worthy of reverence, has almost entirely disappeared. Now the people use the Ngoni form of sitting down, and waiting to be addressed by the superior, and expressing respect by bowing the body and slightly clapping the hands.

The intention of the Ngoni was evidently to suppress all other languages and make their own the only one. They had already passed through so many tribes with widely varying tongues, and their residence among them had been for so short a time, that they had scorned to speak the local dialects ; and when they came to Tumbuka country, they absorbed such numbers of the varied tribes that surrounded them, that a Babel of languages was spoken by the slave population. There were Chewa, Tumbuka, Tonga, Senga, and various other forms of Nyasaland language spoken by these subjugated people, and rather than give up what they reckoned, and rightly reckoned, a stately language for any of the spluttering, clipped, and effeminate-sounding dialects of the surrounding peoples, they compelled them to master Chingoni. In all the conversation of the rulers, and all the court cases, Chingoni alone was spoken. To this day many of the old Ngoni men and women profess to be unable either to speak or to understand the local language. On the other hand, the poor ignorant slave women could not learn this masterful language with its clicks, and dental linguals, and continued to speak among themselves and to their children the language of their own people, and as the children first learned to speak from the lips of their mothers, they acquired the speech of Central Africa rather than that of

south of the Zambesi, for the Ngoni women were but a small portion of the nation.

Afterwards, when the strong power of the spear was broken, and the rulers no longer exercised an undisputed sway over their people, villages began to break up into congenial groups. Numbers of Tumbuka or other local head men were allowed to form their own villages, and to move into the neighbouring untilled lands to open up new gardens for their masters, and send them a regular supply of the beer grain. The result was that the Ngoni atmosphere no longer predominated in these villages, and the Tumbuka tongue and customs began to assert themselves. The temples to the spirits of the ancestors were built again, the suppressed dances were revived, and the language spoken began to be more and more the old language of the soil. To-day while a few villages still retain Chingoni as the common speech, there are large districts in which it is an unusual thing to find even an old Ngoni who speaks the pure language of his fathers, and one seldom hears it from the lips of a young person. When Chingoni is still used in village lawsuits, etc., it is usually debased by an admixture of Chitumbuka. Since large numbers of young men began to go to the South African mines for work, there has been a slight attempt to revive the language of the south, but this has only produced a temporary flicker. One seldom hears it on the road or in the village, except from a few of the old aristocrats, or in brag and jest from one's carriers, though then it takes the form of that awful bastard language, "Kitchen Kaffir," used by their European masters at the mines.

The other race whose contact with these people has modified their characteristics is the European. The white men's influence has been altogether out of proportion to their numbers, and while this book really describes in detail some of the conscious efforts that have been made to alter

the civilization and religion of the people, it is well to mention some of the permanent modifications which have necessarily and perhaps unintentionally followed on the presence of Europeans among them.

There are only eight European men and six ladies in the land. For about fifteen years the only Europeans were the missionaries, although occasionally a trader or visitor passed through. Since then there has come a European agent of the African Lakes Corporation, and a Nyasaland and a Rhodesian Government station have been opened, for the boundary line between these two administrations unfortunately cuts through Ngoniland. The class of Europeans who have been in contact with the natives in their own land has been an unusually high one. We have no derelict whites, or men who do not recognize that large responsibilities are involved in their residence here. There are no half-caste children, and there has been no prostitution of native women. Happily, there never have been resident Arabs or coast-men in the tribe, and only in recent years have there come a few East Indians in charge of native stores. Prostitution is one of the curses which enter Central Africa in the train of the white-robed Mohammedan, whose garments are *not* the insignia of bodily purity.

The presence of the European cannot be said to have in any way modified the physical type of the people, except in so far as the better feeding and greater cleanliness and civilization of the natives themselves have strengthened and beautified their bodies.

I am not aware that new diseases have been introduced by the European. Smallpox was a fearful scourge long before any white men appeared. It swept over the Tumbuka just before the coming of the Ngoni with most deadly results, leaving some villages almost empty. An old Tumbuka chieftainess has told me that when the epidemic passed through her father's village, it left no men to herd the goats

and cattle, and she and other girls had to do this work. It seems that in this case the disease was carried into the country by an Arab slave caravan, as so often happened in other parts of Central Africa. Phthisis is not yet a common disease, although one or two cases of it have been known to our doctors, and there is grave danger that it may be spread by natives returning from the south. Since the introduction of clothing rheumatism has become very common. The presence of the European and the lessons which have been learned by hospital treatment seem rather to have improved the health of the people. It is plain that infant mortality has greatly decreased, and that the new monogamy of the people tends to much larger families. Many of the women in the Church have five, six, or seven children alive, a condition which was entirely unknown in polygamous and heathen families.

One hopes that the presence of the European has made for a higher social morality, especially as in almost every European home there are a lady and children. From them certain subtle refining influences are bound to radiate, for the African is supremely imitative, and the lessons he learns by the eye are more rapidly assimilated than those he learns by the ear. Yet I do not think that an inarticulate example, which is not enforced by the precepts of religion, is strong enough to overcome the inertia of the people. The example of home-life, and respect for women may be a daily vision, but they are reckoned the peculiarity of the European, and the native will merely admire and say "But your women are not like ours. We could not treat our wives as you do yours." And I question if a single native, by the influence of a silent moral example, has ever changed so much of his social customs as even to eat along with his wife. Indeed, I am so bold as to assert that the native employees about a European station, unless they are strictly controlled, and definitely instructed, become a moral menace to the com-

munity. When money is too plentiful, and a sufficient moral supervision is not exercised over men who are removed from the social restraints of their own village life, a deplorable condition of immorality and debauchery is almost sure to appear.

The most apparent influence of the presence of the European on the native has been along the line of industrial and commercial changes. Every white man must employ for his own use a considerable staff of natives in intelligent or more mechanical labour. Intelligent labour is always well paid, and to be efficient it must be continuous, and thus tends to the development of general capacity. The more mechanical labourer is paid at a standard rate of three shillings a month, and for journeys at about twopence a day. This is wealth to the native, and if his work is at all prolonged, he amasses a sum of money in a year which provides him with many luxuries which the other villagers do not possess. At first men would only work for short periods, a month in the year being considered a good spell. But, gradually, as the profits gained became visible, and daily labour a habit, the desire for labour has immensely increased. To the native who has been accustomed to regular employment, idleness becomes irksome, and poverty degrading. And in this way great numbers of the people have been weaned from their old habits of drunken indolence, and have become normally industrious, while not a few others have developed a new intelligence which has been created by the exigencies of their work.

Yet, in spite of the veneer of civilization which has come by industry and wealth, one is aware that until Christianity has broken on a man's soul, he may still be essentially bound by the most foolish superstitions, and by a degrading laxity of morals. It is no uncommon thing to find the regular worker, and intelligent clerk, become a social plague through his having broken loose from some of the religious

and communistic prohibitions of village life, without having found a new restraint in religious faith.

Clothes are not the essence of civilization, nor is wealth a higher morality.

With increased industry and money a new commercial standard has been introduced. There was a time when a cow could be bought for less than five shillings' worth of calico, and when a good tusk of ivory only cost the Biza or Swahili trader a few fathoms of calico and some beads. But now the prices of things are much nearer their true value. English money has become the standard currency, and the European has largely fixed prices by the amount he is willing to pay, and through competition he cannot pay much less than their true market value. Of course, the great cost of exportation has necessarily kept that price lower than it is in places nearer to European markets, but this is not always clear to the native who has experience of the prices at Blantyre or Salisbury. The articles which cannot be exported have not changed much in price in the last twenty years. Thus, a small African fowl still sells for twopence, and a basket of maize, weighing perhaps forty pounds, for fourpence. But cows cannot now be bought for under three pounds, and ivory, which is very scarce, demands every shilling that the trader can afford to give, and that is settled by the condition of the London market.

The new wealth has greatly altered the type of clothing worn by the natives. Not many years ago the dress of the men consisted of little more than two small skins hanging at their loins, and of a yard of calico or less for the women. In the cold weather they wrapped about them a dressed cow's skin, or a big piece of bark cloth. Few of the people had any kind of covering to protect themselves from the cold of the nights. Now this poverty and nakedness has largely disappeared. The ordinary dress of a man is four or six yards of blue or white calico, sewn into a width of five

feet, and thrown gracefully over his shoulders, or tied about his loins. The women drape the same type of calico about them, passing it under the armpits and gathering the fullness in front, bind it with a coloured piece of cloth about the waist. European clothing, in the form of white drill, or khaki trousers and jacket, or perhaps some very dilapidated tweeds, and a shirt, form the dress of boys who have worked in the south. Large numbers have also imported boots and very torn socks, but these are only worn on great state occasions. Not more than two or three natives in the entire tribe have yet become habitual wearers of boots.

When we seek for modifications in the vernacular which have been introduced by the European, I do not think we are on very firm ground. English is known only to a few well-educated boys. Missionaries must acquire the local language, and they compose the major part of the white population, and its most educative influence, but the natives in contact with them have not necessarily learned English. Only those who have deliberately set themselves to study it, can understand it. But their language has been enriched (or, if you prefer it, debased) by the introduction of many words from English which have been given a native form. Thus, we constantly hear even raw natives use such words as "pleasaniko" from the polite word "please," for which there is no proper equivalent in the native language : for commercial commodities such adapted words as these are used, "sopo" (soap), "makina" (machine). With a curious truth, which has doubtlessly arisen from mission sermons, intoxication is spoken of as having drunk "mademone" (demons). Bricks are called "mabrickese," a school "skulu," a church building "churiche," and so on.

I have no hesitation in saying that English will not be a commonly understood language in this tribe in our generation, unless an entire change comes over the number of Europeans in residence. I think, however, that we have had

great influence in fixing the common vernacular of the people. At first we only used Chingoni in speaking and teaching, and that was the language of the schools. Then as we began to recognize the necessity of speaking Chitumbuka owing to the large number of people, especially the women, who did not understand Chingoni, we commenced to use it only. At first we could not get the teachers to preach in Chitumbuka. They had not yet translated religious terms from Chingoni to Chitumbuka, and in prayer especially were completely at a loss for words. Now one seldom hears an extempore prayer in Chingoni, and hardly ever a sermon. I believe that the fact of the adoption of Chitumbuka by the European missionaries has manifestly helped to instate it as the common tongue of the people.

These are some modifications which one has seen taking place in the tribal type. But one is aware that greater and much more drastic changes are sure to occur. With the growth of intelligence, especially among the young, reverence for the traditions of the past, and for the elders, who have not made commensurate advance, and for superstitions which propped social order, is sure to be weakened. Parental authority is rapidly decreasing. Chiefs can no longer compel obedience. Magic penalties which were supposed to follow certain sins against society no longer terrify. So, unless the European is serious in his efforts to provide strong and permanent social bulwarks in place of those that are crumbling away, one can only look forward with dread to the future of this composite people.

PART III. CHANGES

CHAPTER XIX

HORA

IN 1900 I went home on furlough, and in the following year was back in Ngoniland with my wife, who is a medical graduate. We were appointed to Hora on our return. This station consisted of a little dwelling-house, and a log schoolhouse, and is situated in a place of surpassing beauty, though the house has its back turned to all that is worth seeing. Behind it lies the deep valley of the Kasitu, from which rises a long wall of rocky and tree-clad hills which forms the ascent to the Vipya. Almost in front stands the huge outcrop of stone called Hora. The outline of this mass in the soft light of the evening wears a curious likeness to a gigantic recumbent head of the late Sir William Harcourt, whose double chin falls away in rounded folds to the plain. On this hill a great massacre of the Tumbuka had taken place at one of the last rebellions, as I have related in Chapter I.

The local chief was called Muzuku-zuku, a distant relative of the reigning family, who really acted as regent for a sister of Mombera. He was an ambitious and far-seeing man, who, from the first, had been friendly to the mission, though on one occasion he had created no little alarm by visiting his favourite raiding ground at the Lake, and burning down one of the mission schools. But when he first had the honour of having Mr. Maccallum as a resident missionary among

his own people, he knew that his prestige in the tribe had been immensely increased, and he cherished his missionary with the most jealous care. For five years the station had not been inhabited by a European, though work was continuously carried on by means of a native teacher. So when we returned, and took possession of the deserted house, Muzuku-zuku's welcome to us was unbounded.

Once, when a war scare had arisen and some fears were entertained about the intentions of a neighbouring chief, he had surrounded the station with a little band of his warriors to protect Mr. Maccallum ; and again, when a foolish rumour of rebellion against the Government at the Lake came up to the hills, he offered us his guard and volunteered to send an *impi* to assist the Government against his old enemies the Tonga. But we only laughed at his zeal and told him to sit at ease, for fighting days were over.

Hora proved a good centre for that section of Ngoniland which was put under our care. But it was only twenty-seven miles from Ekwendeni, and away far to the south of us a large new population, unreached by any mission effort, was settling in the woods, opening new garden ground. As soon as extensions could be made we should find ourselves on the outside edge of our parish, instead of in its centre.

We soon saw that if we wished to conduct our work with any efficiency, considerable additions would require to be made to our buildings. To do this we had only £20, which had been given to me by a friend to expend on anything I required. So we decided to call on the people, who are rich in time, if not in money, to contribute free labour for the erection of the necessary houses. In this Muzuku-zuku gave us his energetic co-operation, and soon we had hundreds of willing workers in the brickfield who toiled for us, receiving nothing in return but a meal of maize porridge at midday. Before the end of the year we had hurriedly erected with sun-dried bricks, a dispensary, a little car-

penter's shop, two schoolrooms, and a large cruciform church capable of accommodating over a thousand people. These houses were devoid of any architectural feature, and the walls stood only eight or ten feet high, but we had provided for our immediate necessities, and when we had whitewashed all the exteriors, the station had a simple and neat appearance.

A good part of our first year was spent in prolonged journeys among the outlying villages. We found that with the pacification of the country the slave people were deserting their old masters, with their consent, and were erecting for themselves temporary, and very disreputable villages beside the rich new gardens which they were cultivating. The crops they grew consisted almost entirely of the small millet (*lupoko*) from which beer is made, and thus supplies of this intoxicating drink were ensured for themselves and their Ngoni masters to whom they sent portions of their harvest.

The villages were miserable collections of temporary huts, around which the grass grew unhoed. Drunkenness and all its attendant evils were rampant, and as no oversight was exercised by the chiefs, lawlessness was everywhere. Evil and licentious habits of the Chewa and Tumbuka, which had been suppressed by the stricter Ngoni, were revived, and outbreaks of superstition terrorized the people.

One of these strange waves was in full movement at this time. It was called *Kayeyi*, which was the name of a magical medicine. Some clever impostor had arisen in the land who gave out that he had the medicine for everlasting life, and all who were inoculated with it would never die. To increase the demand for his services, he claimed that the inoculated would also have power to convey this priceless gift to others if they followed his directions. In a short time "witch-doctors" were everywhere making capital of their miraculous powers. They would come into a village carrying

My Washerwoman in Gala Dress

The crest of the golden-crested crane surmounts all. Her head is encircled with strings of bright-coloured little beads. Her ears have ivory ornaments. On her neck is a collar of polished brass wire, and strings of pink beads. Her arms and wrists have the same jewellery. Her dress is white calico, tied round with a red coloured handkerchief.

Hora Mountain

Here the Tumbuka massacre took place. The skulls and bones of the rebels may still be picked up in the holes of the rocks.

their bag of implements and offer to treat the villagers, demanding in return goats and even cattle. Should the people refuse the gift, they would produce a miniature bow, and threaten to utter certain cabalistic words which would stab the people to the heart, and in a day they would be lying dead.

Now, so strong was the inbred dread of these magicians, that not a single village refused to be robbed of its goods, each and all submitting to the charm. One day we came to Ng'onomo's head village, and he at once began an indignant story of how he was being robbed of his cattle by the *Kayeyi* "doctors."

"But they are all impostors and liars," I said.

"Yes, I know they are," he replied.

"Then why do you submit to them? You should thrash them and drive them out as thieves."

"If I dared to touch them, their words would stab me to the heart, and I should die," he answered.

Argument could do little against so strong a foe as the people's inherent superstition, and, until some bold man could be induced to defy the "doctors," and make them smart, we could scarcely hope to set the deluded people free.

But deliverance was nearer than we thought.

Some time after, we were in another part of the country, sixty miles distant from Ng'onomo's. The head man there was a very feeble old fellow, who left much of his business to his big stalwart son, who was one of our teachers. The old man sat entertaining us with stories of the robberies that were being committed on all sides by the *Kayeyi* "doctors." I pointed out his folly in submitting to their impositions. Showed him that the only defence the "doctors" had was their impossible threat of sudden death, and he would soon end the outbreak if he caught and whipped the next man who came along demanding the goods of the people.

At this point, the school drum began to beat for a service,

and we were just about to rise to go to it, when the people spied a *Kayeyi* "doctor" and his procession winding up the valley. "Catch him," I whispered to the regent son, and up he started along with some of the educated boys, and raced after the "doctor." In a few minutes they were back with the whole company in captivity. The prisoners were shut up in a hut, while the people trooped off to worship. When service was over the son sat and tried the case in his father's stead. The old man would not venture near. The "doctor" was soon proved guilty, and his whole accoutrement of imposture was opened up, and, after being laughed over, was burned in a fire. The "doctor" was then tied, and the young chief gave him a smart stroke with his whip and asked him whether he would give up his robberies. The touch of the whip at once unloosed his tongue, and he vowed he would never touch the medicine again, it was all a deception.

He was then untied and told to run. Up he started with his satellites, the village dogs at their heels; but the sight of a man running was as exciting to the hunting instincts of the people as to the dogs, and off they started in pursuit with whistles and cries. Through the wood and down the hill-side fled the "doctor" and his men, dogs barking and villagers shouting. Medicine horns, feather trappings, and every encumbrance were thrown aside, and into the mist of the evening the *Kayeyi* "doctors" disappeared.

That was the death of *Kayeyi*. When other village head men saw that the young chief was unharmed, they plucked up heart and defied the "doctors," until it became dangerous for one of them to venture into a village lest some wise person should take them and whip them without fear.

Year after year at this time, swarms of locusts appeared with the rains, and did such grievous harm to the crops, that frequently the people were in a state of semi-starvation. They could not afford to lose a portion of their garden produce, for the land was becoming very impoverished

through long years of extravagant cultivation, and the maize produced was dwarfed and thin.

One Sunday as we were gathering to church we saw the dreaded brown cloud of locusts rising over the Kasitu Valley, and we watched it for some time, trying to persuade ourselves it was not coming our way. Worship went on as usual, and I had just given out my text and was beginning to preach, when the whirr of the wings of myriads of locusts was heard and the sky became darkened with the dense cloud of them. At once I pronounced the benediction, and feeling all the restraint of decorum past, the congregation melted away in a minute, running for the doors and leaping through the low windows. They scattered with all speed to their gardens where the young maize was standing a foot high, shouting as they ran to drive the locusts up. And then all through the Sunday the country round us rang with the beating of drums, blowing of horns, clanging of iron, and shouting of people, as the distracted cultivators tried to save their plantations from the ravages of the devouring host. But what was one man against a million locusts ?

In the evening my wife and I were walking together when we met one of the elders, an inveterate optimist, coming home from his garden.

" Well, Josef," I cried, " where have you been ? "

" Seeing my garden, sir."

" And how did you find it ? "

" Palibe, sir " (It does not exist), he answered, with a broad smile.

There was heroism there, for the rainy season was well advanced, and a fresh planting would only at the best produce a meagre crop.

Many of the people were seized with despair, and there began numerous migrations into the sheltered wood country to the west and south in the hopes of hiding away from these annual pests.

It was soon evident that if the tribe was not to get out of hand entirely, the chiefs must make an effort to congregate their people, and also that if our station was to get into the heart of the work it had to do, we must change our location and go south. With a view to discuss the whole situation, the paramount chief called a meeting of the heads of the tribe who lived in our section of the country, and I was asked to attend. A huge concourse assembled, and for a day there was frank talk over the whole situation. The chiefs were unanimous in desiring to move on to new ground. There is no doubt the supreme thought that impelled them was the desire for greater opportunities to cultivate the beer grain. But they pointed out that their people were scattering, and they could not be reassembled on the old worn gardens. The only thing to do was to go with them to these "fresh woods and pastures new" and gather together where they would have plenty to eat and drink, and they asked if I would accompany them. I answered that we wanted to get into the centre of our population, and that if the mission council agreed to our changing the site, I would migrate with them provided they erected our public buildings free of cost, while we paid for our dwelling-houses. The pledge was at once given that they would do their share, and soon after the mission council allowed us to prospect for a new site.

After some preliminary prospecting by the natives, I set out one day with Muzuku-zuku and a great company of his people to see the land which he had chosen for a new settlement. I had asked for a central place which would be about the heart of the general movement of the people, for good water, and for a flat land which would not be worn away in a few years by the wash of rains, as we have seen happen when hilly ground is deforested and cultivated.

After a tramp of forty miles we were shown the country that, after much discussion, they had selected. It was flat

enough, entirely wooded with good trees, but the water supply seemed very uncertain. They argued that there is no running water for a hundred miles, unless we go back to the steep hills, and that the deep standing pools held good and sufficient water throughout the dry season. The river where we halted is called the Lwasoze (the River of Tears), a name of doubtful portent. After examining the great pools of water which then stood deep and clear, though it was the beginning of the hot season, I decided that we should, at least, experiment with a site there, and a piece of land was marked out for the mission.

Next day Muzuku-zuku started his first village. He had already selected the site privately along with one of his indunas, and a "doctor" had been called to make the preliminary arrangements. The spot where the cattle-kraal was to be built had been pointed out, and a stake driven into the ground to mark it. The "doctor" had then kindled a new fire by friction, for a burning log from an old hearth must not begin the village fire. The "doctor" had then gone all about the site, and cutting a branch here and there from trees where the houses would be built had thrown these on the fire. All these preparations had been done in secret, but now the public foundation laying of the village was to begin.

In the morning the chief crossed the river with about two hundred men and came to the place pitched upon. When they got there the men shouted "Mlango lo! Mlango lo!" [There is Mlango, the name of the village]. They then clasped hands and spread out in a great circle round an ant-hill, thus measuring out the size of the cattle-kraal. Each man now scraped the earth hard with his feet, his mark joining that of his neighbour, and then began to dig vigorously with a pointed stick the place which he had marked, and so in half an hour a deep narrow trench denoted the circumference of the kraal.

Now, the men all turned aside to the wood that was about them, and applied themselves to the chopping down of trees with their little axes, until there was a sound of falling timber in every direction. These trees after being stripped of branches and leaves were carried to the narrow trench and driven into it, and soon several hundred poles were forming the circular fence of the kraal. The trench was then filled with earth, which was firmly pressed down, and the timber was fastened immovably by a band of wattles and bark rope. The cattle-pen now stood complete, large enough to accommodate hundreds of beasts, or to allow hundreds of men to dance together, or talk any public case.

The "doctor's" fire in the kraal was stirred up, and when it was burning brightly, charms were cast into it, that no beasts of prey might enter the village to destroy the live stock of the people.

Now that the kraal was finished, a little hut was built outside it which was to be the bachelor quarters of the chief, where he might live beside the cattle as the first resident in his own village.

During the erection of this house the services of the "doctor" were again called into requisition. He stuck a horn of medicine into the ground near the door of the hut, and placed an overturned pot on top. Around the pot he planted some green branches from a tree which quickly takes root. And these medicines have prophylactic powers against any evil that might otherwise come to the village. The chief was then given a medicinal preparation with which to wash his entire body, so that the village quarrels might not stick to him. And the "doctor" told the chief in formal language, that, as these little trees grew, so would his health and wealth, and while they prospered no harm would come to the community.

That evening the herd that had accompanied us was driven into the kraal; the chief slept in his own house;

his men lay within the kraal : and so they took possession of their new village.

On the following day the people began to erect temporary houses of logs planted in circular trenches and meeting at the apex. Grass was loosely thrown about them and a home was ready for immediate occupation. And so arose the first villages which were to be occupied for the next two or three years ; while the people opened up their new gardens and adjusted themselves to their new environment.

Meanwhile, I had done nothing more than erect my tent and a grass shade, and so entered into possession of my land. For the next few months we travelled back and forward between Lwasoze and Hora, waiting and experimenting, and fixing nothing. But we soon saw that the first piece of land given us would not be suitable. It was very hot and low-lying. The ground was poor, and the water when chemically tested proved to be impure. So we set about searching for a more suitable locality, and began to get dreadfully depressed about our prospects when we failed to strike anything better.

One afternoon, our optimistic elder Josef turned up smiling. He had hit on a bit of country which, according to his description, must be Elysium. The land was rich red soil, the trees standing high and straight, and there was a spring of cold clear water near at hand. His find was only two miles off. When we set out with him, and examined the ground and the water we were not much disappointed, and we felt that this place should meet all our requirements.

So we shifted our camp again, and began to make preparations for a rain-proof house in which to shelter during the wet season. Every day we stayed there we felt more decidedly that we had found a permanent site, and we set about making bricks for a little house which might serve as one of the buildings of the station which was to be. Our little river is called the Kakoma (the Pretty Little Stream)—

happier appellation than that of the "River of Tears" that we had abandoned.

It was somewhat difficult to locate our surroundings because the land was so flat, and covered with dense wood in which no paths were yet trodden. When we moved about we had to blaze the trees so that we might find our way back. But we soon discovered the beginnings of large settlements in every direction, none nearer than two or three miles, and we knew that in a year or two a heavy population would be about us.

When the neighbouring chiefs saw that we were likely to settle there, they marked out for us about a square mile of land, and told us that it was ours, if we chose to use it. So we walked round the boundaries with them, and marked the trees, that all might know the portion of land into which no native gardeners might trespass without first obtaining our permission as owners of the soil.

CHAPTER XX

THE BUILDING OF A VILLAGE

FOR the next three or four years scores of villages began to rise in our vicinity, as the people migrated from the old worn land, and left their former villages blazing behind them. Not a soul stayed when a village moved off, for no one would be bold enough to live in the dirt and tangle and beside the deserted graves of the old site.

It is seldom that a village remains in one place more than five or six years. By that time the surroundings become most insanitary. The village gets full of the graves of the dead, and the houses become unbearably infected with vermin. These frequent removals have made the natives expert builders, and the order to be followed is stereotyped—the plan being that of concentric circles.

The heart of a village is the cattle-kraal which is built, as I have previously described, round a great ant-hill. In this open pen the cattle stand all night, but their calves are housed in the huts of the people. When the heavy rains come, the cows trample the earth into deep mud in which they stand almost up to their udders, glad of the protection this gives from flies. In the evening the chief bull may be seen on the top of the great ant-hill in the centre of the kraal, majestic with his huge hump and long dewlap, and about him are half a dozen cows maintaining a precarious footing on the slippery sides.

Just outside the kraal there is a circle of grain barns,

hollow wickerwork cylinders, raised two feet above the ground to protect them from white ants and damp, plastered with mud and thatched with grass. They stand perhaps ten or twelve feet high, and are four or five feet broad. In the larger ones maize is stored, and in smaller ones millet and ground nuts. In a partial circle outside the barns are square sheds with flat roofs, on which baskets of grain may be laid, and under the shade women grind their millet, and cook their food. The fowl and pigeon houses and goat-pens are in this second circle. The goat's house is built of logs leaning against one another at the apex, and forming a circle at the base. Three feet up from the ground there is a floor of round timber to keep the goats from the wet soil and so prevent them getting foot-rot in damp weather.

A round cylinder of bark taken from a large tree and supported high upon two forked logs forms the hen-house, to which no thieving hyenas or leopards can reach, and near it the branch of a tree stuck upright into the ground has a broken pot resting on its forks in which green scummy water stands for the use of the domestic fowls and pigeons.

After this second circle there is a small open space where the large wooden mortars in which the women pound their maize are standing or lying. In a tidy village this space is well swept, and the ground trodden hard by the constant coming and going of bare feet. But more frequently it is overgrown with grass, and littered with maize cobs and heaps of chaff, in which pigeons and fowls are continually scraping.

Now we come to the inner circle of huts which runs three-quarters round the kraal, leaving an open unbuilt space at the cattle-gate. The chief's house is at the back of the kraal, its door looking towards the cattle-gate. His wives' and children's huts standing three or five yards apart follow the inner circle. Then comes a second and larger line of huts behind the first line, and at the back of these stand the owners' grain stores, and so on for perhaps three or four

A Konde Hut

These huts at the north end of Lake Nyasa are the most beautiful and artistic in Africa. They are built of poles and mud. Outside they are framed with small bamboos, and small bits of moulded clay are placed between the bamboos.

circles in a large village. At the time of this migration the tendency was to break up into very small hamlets of perhaps a dozen houses. But we are now seeing the people congregating in large villages of seventy and a hundred huts. This has been accomplished by a wise order of Government.

The houses are all perfectly circular. There is no square thing in nature, or in native life. The circle is the standard of all native design. The huts are built of wooden poles, perhaps ten or twelve feet long, and have a diameter of from ten to twenty feet. To mark out the foundations a peg is fastened in the ground and over this an endless strip of bark is thrown which is drawn taut by an axe held in the hand of a native. He walks round the peg making his axe describe a complete circle with the bark rope as radius. A trench is then dug, into which the poles are thrust, and after they have been steadied by pressing earth firmly round about them, they are tied by two or three bands of stripped bark and wattle. The men then cut the ends of the poles to an even height, leaving a little doorway about five feet high.

Now they fetch great bundles of wattles from the scrub near, and when they have collected a sufficient number, they make a little circle of about six inches diameter with small twigs firmly bound by strong bark. The sharpened thick ends of the wattle are thrust into this circle till they stretch out from it like a hundred willowy spokes of a wheel. A foot lower a second circle of small twigs is bound round the widening spokes, and bark is tightly wound round it, securely holding each wattle in its place.

The roof is now raised on to a short log which stands upright, and on it the first little circle rests while the spokes stretch out wide till they touch the ground. Then circle after circle of light twigs and bark is made holding the wattles in their place. New twigs with sharpened points are thrust into these circles where the space between the spokes is too wide, until a firm roof has been tied. With great noise and shout-

ing the men of the village assist to raise it over the poles of the house and set it evenly there like the lid on a beehive. Half the length of the roof is over the house, the remaining half overhanging to form the wide eaves, or verandah. Four poles are raised from the ground in the interior to support the roof if the house is a wide one. Small trees are now sought for in the wood, and brought to the village. They are perhaps four feet high, and about three inches in diameter, and these are placed to support the eaves.

The roof is now ready for thatching. So a bundle of grass is taken and bound firmly together with bark rope at one end. This is evenly cut, and is thrust on to the spikes of wattle that form the apex of the roof. Bundles of loose grass are then pushed in an ever descending line under the top layers. These are tied down, and branches laid at intervals on the top to hold the grass in position until the rains have come and plastered it into firmness. The fringes of grass round the eaves are neatly cut with an axe, and perhaps part of the verandah is closed in by short poles, so making an extra room for the housewives' pots and baskets.

Two very solid posts are now placed in the ground inside the house on either side of the doorway, and the man's share of housebuilding is practically over. He only requires to make the door, if he has not an old one from his last house. He does this by plaiting together strong reeds laid transversely over one another, and tying them with solid strips of bark worked out and in among the reeds.

The interstices through which the wind might blow are stopped with cow's manure, and perhaps the ends of the door are made firm and enduring by sewing ox-hide round them. The door will be closed at night by jamming a cross-bar between it and the inner door-posts, and nothing can open it unless the inmates lift the bar. When the good wife leaves the village in the day-time she will slip the

cross-bar through a loop of string which is attached to the centre of the door, and lay it across the outside of the doorway. An entrance can easily be effected by pulling the bar away, but to enter a strange house unauthorized is a crime of the gravest kind.

Now that the man's work is over the woman's begins. She hoes earth at the base of an ant-hill, and after pouring on it pot after pot of water she tramps the mud thoroughly. This she carries into the house until she has made several large heaps on the floor. Dipping her hands into the water so that the mud may not adhere to her fingers, she now takes up a handful and sticks it in between the poles of the hut, until at least all light is closed out, and the wall is roughly plastered. Next day she returns to find that big pieces of mud have fallen during the night, and these she carefully replaces. Then with well-moistened hands she rubs the damp mud over and over, filling in the cracks, and smoothing the surface. This is the work of many days while the walls continue drying.

Now, when the plastering is completed, she tackles the floor. Red earth is strewn thickly, and levelled. Pot after pot of water is sprinkled over that until the whole is thoroughly sodden. The next day, if the earth has dried sufficiently, she begins to beat it with a stick her husband has carved for her, and makes a little hollowed basin in the centre for her fire, and lines off a segment of the floor with a rim of earth to mark her cupboard. All day she beats until the floor has attained a certain hardness. Next morning when she returns to the hut she finds her floor cracked all over with deep, wide fissures which the drying mud has left. Over these she sprinkles a little water, and patiently beats the mud until the cracks close. Day by day she repeats this process while the floor is thoroughly drying, until it is all one consistent mass without a rift.

Now she goes to the nearest marsh, and brings back little

honeycombed ant-heaps, of a hard, black earth. These she pounds into dust, and mixes the dust with water, and then smears a portion of the floor with it. Taking a round water-worn stone she rolls it and rubs it, laying all her weight on the stone, until a shining, black cake is formed. As this dries some of it will crack and peel, and the worker must damp and roll it again. At last, after some days of beating and rolling the whole floor shows a glossy, black surface like polished ebony.

When the interior of the house is finished, she goes to the doorway and repeats the same floor-making process there, and if she is an ambitious woman she plasters a good part of the outside wall of her house under the eaves.

Now the house is ready for occupation, a most inviting, clean and cool abode. One or two reed mats are spread on the floor. In the segment which was rimmed off for a cupboard, the wife puts the pride of her heart, her array of baskets and clay pots, and between the four roof pillars her husband hangs a reed tray over the smoke of the fire, on which she lays her salt, and tobacco, and one or two other articles that require to be kept dry.

But the house is not long so tidy. The good wife loves to see the pots accumulate, and soon she will have a score of them heaped in that corner of her dwelling. I have counted as many as fifty pots and baskets in a single hut, every one of them overlaid with soot and dust, for there is no chimney in the house and dusters are unknown. The master of the house also has been collecting rubbish, and from wooden pegs there hang ragged blankets, and old shirts, while clubs and spears stand against the wall. The smoke, too, has been uninterruptedly leaving its mark. The roof soon becomes black and polished. Soot-laden cobwebs gather about the pots and festoon the roof-pillars. Cockroaches grow fat on the food leavings, and swarm in every dark corner. And then the house tick enters, and in spite of all

the good housewife can do by daily sweepings, and the cleanly smearing of her floor with cow-dung, they increase until the nights become painful, and sleep is broken. In five or seven years these unwelcome guests oust their hosts, who are driven forth to prepare fresh quarters for themselves.

Around the village, too, the bush has grown so insanitary, that it is well a flitting has become compulsory. Much longer residence on this site will be dangerous to health, and the condition of the houses within, as well as the destruction wrought by borers and white ants on the wood of the walls, make a combination of untidiness and discomfort that will lead to a general demoralization of the villagers.

CHAPTER XXI

LOUDON

THE district in which we had now settled is close by the place where Zongwendaba lived for two or three years after coming up from the Zambesi and before going north to Tanganyika. He had found there a sub-tribe of Chewa, who were ruled by a chief called Chulu, whom he conquered, absorbing his little clan. Here some bloody massacres occurred which have made the memory of the place rather unsavoury. One was in connection with a reaction against the "witch doctors." A great many accusations were being made by them against leading people in the tribe. Conspiracies, poisonings, bewitchings were frequently being reported by them, and the culprits were revealed by their charms and charlatanry. Apparently, they had overdone it, for the suspicions of Zongwendaba were aroused that possibly the "doctors" were not so discerning as they were spiteful. So one night when all were asleep, he took the blood of a slain goat, and secretly entered an unoccupied hut, and sprinkled it on the walls and the floor. Next morning he rose and was seen to enter this hut unconcernedly, and then come forth in much agitation. "There's blood on the walls and the floor," he cried. "Who has been murdering?"

Then the head men having been called together and all the witch "doctors," they were shown what had been discovered in the hut and told to discern, and declare who the murderer was. They consulted together, and then proceeded to go

through their cryptic tricks, until at last they unanimously arrived at and denounced the culprit. Then Zongwendaba rose up in triumph and declared the stratagem he had arranged to test the reality of their detections, and laying the blame on their shoulders for all the judicial murders that had recently taken place, he ordered every man of them to be killed.

When the tribe moved away to the north, they left this country deserted, and for sixty years or so no people settled there. But three or four years before we came to the Lwasoze many villages, consisting chiefly of Chewa and Tumbuka slaves, had returned to their old land, and were scattered up and down the woods. These people, away from the control of their Ngoni masters, had reverted to the practices of their forefathers. Every night the rattle of drums could be heard, and waves of minor dance music floated to us from these hidden villages. When one passed through them one saw the little temples of the spirits, and straggling collections of untidy houses with no cattle-kraal, and no arrangement. The people were very timid of us. They feared the Ngoni migration which was following us, and many deserted their villages and moved off to new ground rather than remain in the neighbourhood of the masterful Ngoni. The disorder of these communities was evident. Near our site were three deserted villages, from which all the inhabitants had fled a year before, after a drunken fight which had ended in the death of one or two. Every week we heard of cases of administration of the *mwavi* poison ordeal. In one week as many as three different parties were brought to us for treatment after having drunk *mwavi*.

We were soon to feel the danger of this want of authority ourselves. One day a little girl who carried water for us from the well to the house, a distance of a few hundred yards, did not appear at midday. She had gone off with her pail

a little before, and had not returned. In the afternoon, when she was still missing, we sent to her village to see whether she had gone home ill, but she had not been seen there. Her mother came to hear of the inquiries and hastened to our house in a wild state of fright. "My child! my child!" she cried. "She is killed; an enemy has killed her!" And she flung herself on the ground, beating her head and breasts, and weeping.

We sent out searchers all over the country, but no news could be heard of little Vibi. But this we learned, that her mother had burnt her husband alive by deliberately setting fire to his hut when he was asleep, and she had many enemies, so we feared the worst. Some months after, a band of workers who were cutting trees in the thick wood a few yards off from the well, came on human bones, a few beads and torn cloth, and a pail. The beads and cloth were soon identified as Vibi's, and the pail as ours, and when all the marks and spoor were traced it seemed that she must have been caught at the well by some man, and dragged into the wood where she was probably clubbed to death, and her body left for the hyenas. Who the murderer was we could never find out.

Just about this time one of our housegirls was seized at the river where she had been washing, and carried off to a village. There she was maltreated, and shut up in a house by her captors, until her friends came and rescued her.

Now this lawlessness was not confined to the masterless Tumbuka people. Their defenceless condition, as well as their crimes tempted some of the restless young bloods among the Ngoni to make frequent reprisals. One of Mombera's sons raided a village in the wood near where we settled, and carried off the property of the people, among other things a bag of powder. He put the powder in his own hut in spite of the warning of the people, and in the night-time it exploded by some accident and killed him.

Again, my wife and I were touring one day along the valley

of the Rukuru, when we heard that a little punitive expedition sent out by the paramount chief had preceded us. My wife was travelling ahead of me, and when I came up to her I found her by the path examining the body of an old woman, which was lying on the ground covered with spear wounds. A little farther on we suddenly debouched on a village, and were amazed to find all the people standing ready to attack us with spears in their hands, and arrows on their bow-strings. They thought we were the punitive expedition returning, and were ready to fight. When they saw their mistake, they led us to two or three graves in the village where they had just finished burying their dead who had been killed in the former day's attack, and then they brought to us for treatment several people who had spear and club wounds on their bodies.

It was very plain that we were surrounded by a great deal of social disorder, and that no easy task lay before us if we were to produce a quiet and enlightened spirit in the villages of this new district.

At first we had great difficulty in approaching the people. They did not want us. None came to worship on Sunday except a handful of Christians who had followed from Hora. We offered to open schools in some of the valleys near us, but the people refused to have them. When we began to make bricks, the workers engaged were all local people, and now I hoped to familiarize them with my presence, and by the daily morning worship to open up a little truth. But when I ventured to go quietly to the brickfield, which was under the charge of a native foreman, the women and girls left their work and ran off to a distance from which they watched me with dread.

On Sundays the trained workers and ourselves scattered among the villages to attempt preaching, but we found it very hard to get an audience. When I entered a village the women and girls would throw down their pounding pestles

and flee into the bush. The men would sit sulkily at their little tasks, and refuse to leave them to hear what we had to say. It required a great deal of patience and chaffing and talking to disarm their opposition, and get them to gather for worship. Some of the native preachers who had not the prestige of a white man, had to suffer harder things. One Monday a big sawyer returned to his work very much "in the blues." He had gone, in the goodness of his heart, to a village to preach, but a beer-drinking was in progress at the time, and the people had seized his Bible and torn it to pieces, and then had driven him forth with spears and clubs. At another village the native teacher had gathered a few quiet people together to worship, but some people were riotously drinking at the opposite end of the village. These resented the preacher's presence. He had come to denounce their drunkenness, and to turn the hearts of the girls against polygamists, so they rose and attacked the little congregation. They in turn rushed to their huts and, seizing their clubs, defended themselves vigorously, and next morning both parties came to us with their broken heads and bruised bodies, to pour out their grievances, and get their wounds dressed.

Through all this indifference and opposition we quietly pushed on with our work, content if one or two in a village showed any desire to hear us. Meanwhile, the people from the districts round about Hora were gradually migrating to our neighbourhood, and with them came a goodly number of peaceable and enlightened souls, whose presence had an appreciable influence on the surrounding atmosphere.

Then we got ready for a strong and determined attack on the prevailing heathenism. All the old schools in the north were shut down for a month or two, and the teachers gathered together for a combined campaign. After an informal conference, we sent them out along with intelligent Christians who had volunteered for the service, to open

schools everywhere. Two were sent together for their mutual encouragement and guidance. We told them to settle down for a month in every large group of villages that would permit them, and conduct a school, and preach daily. Though the people did not desire them, they were to remain teaching the few who wished to learn, preaching positive truth and avoiding unnecessary denunciations.

And so they went forth with many prayers. Some were welcomed, some were tolerated, others were driven off with violence. But about fifty schools were opened, and conducted daily for one month. By the time this effort was over we had won the victory. Prejudices had been dissipated, new desires had been awakened, some knowledge of what we wished to give was imparted, and when the teachers returned to their homes, deputation after deputation came to us from those villages where they had taught, asking for permanent schools. As quickly as we could we tried to answer their requests, until up and down the land a great network of simple little schools had been spread.

Meanwhile we were hard at work erecting our new station. About this time Dr. Loudon of Hamilton died. He was the friend and physician of Dr. Livingstone, and had helped to identify his body when it was brought back to England. I had been supported by the generosity of himself and his wife. On his death, Mrs. Loudon offered a thousand pounds to erect a memorial hospital to him in my station, but as so large a hospital would involve considerable expenses in the way of nurses, upkeep, etc., and make greater claims on the time of my wife than as wife and mother she could afford to give, I suggested that the gift should be expended on building the dwelling-house and station, and that the place should be called Loudon. The people would do their share in helping to erect hospital and church. This was readily agreed to, and with this goodly sum of money in hand, and a further sum of seven hundred pounds

from our home committee, we proceeded to plan our buildings.

While at Hora, I had started a little store for selling cloth to the people, as there was none in our district. At that time, workers would only take payment in calico, and refused cash because it could not be turned into the goods they required. The store began on a very small scale. The first year's turnover amounted to about thirteen pounds. But gradually it prospered, and with Mrs. Loudon's money laid out as capital for the store until it should be required for buildings, we were able to keep a more tempting selection of goods, and in two or three years we were having a turnover of more than a thousand pounds a year, which yielded us a considerable profit, all of which was spent in the erection of houses on the station, and in road-making.

My brother, who is an architect, provided us with sketch plans for all our houses after I had given him our ideas, and also a ground plan for the station, and our own architect, Mr. Hardie, prepared the plan for our dwelling-house. These plans immediately changed our entire outlook. We no longer aimed at simple amateurish square walls with grass roofs, but saw how with a little effort houses could be erected with some architectural features, and all related so that the station would delight the eye, and increase the order and ease of our work.

Now that we were ready to begin in earnest, we called in the chiefs and people, and reminded them that we had flitted south with them relying on their promise to erect our public buildings, while we paid for the dwellings, and we asked them to fulfil their covenant. The people began to come, at first slowly, but after a few weeks in great batches, until the woods rang all day with the sound of multitudinous workers. Altogether about seven thousand people gave us three weeks' free labour in accordance with the agreement. But only a small part of what we had to do

could be undertaken by voluntary labour, and great gangs of paid workers had to be engaged. Hundreds besieged us for work every Monday morning, though the ordinary man's pay was only two shillings a month. We raised it afterwards to three shillings. Of course, when we selected our labourers from the crowds of applicants, we always gave the preference to those who had given us free labour.

Now, the once silent woods began to hum with humanity. Paths were trodden out in every direction. Gangs of thirty or forty stalwart men pulled great logs to the saw-pits, where seven big saws were hard at work. As they neared the station they raised choruses which were sung to the rhythm of their pulls, and when at last the log was laid in its place alongside of the others, some one of the gang would dash out and execute a wild war-dance, while the others sang and beat the ground in accompaniment. Then off they went to fetch another log.

Another gang was cutting straight-stemmed trees in the wood near us, to serve for scaffolding, and for roofing the houses that were to be thatched. Companies of twenty to thirty women were bringing in great bundles of grass four or five times a day, singing as they came.

Two or three hundred young people were in the brickfield, the trampers in the mud-holes shouting their songs as they danced the clay soft, the children whistling and shouting as they ran about with the brick moulds, and over all rose the strident yells of the moulders as they demanded more mud or more moulds.

The sound of axes could be heard when another lot of men was felling timber for the brick burning, and clearing the station grounds of the thick wood in which we had begun to build. And above all the din there was the pistol-like crack of the waggoners' whips, and their hoarse shouting at the slow-moving oxen which pulled about our two carts.

Most of the labourers had come from distant villages,

and were accommodated in leafy sheds near us. From these the noise of talking, laughing, and singing was prolonged far into the night. We had made a rule that after the church bell rang at nine there must be silence, but frequently the interest of conversation by the night fires became so intense, that one or two dozen seemed to be shouting their arguments at once, and then entirely unable to sleep, we would be compelled to get out of bed and ring the church bell again.

While we were still at the early stages of building, Mr. and Mrs. Riddell Henderson arrived to be colleagues to us on the station. It was a great good fortune to us, for Mr. Henderson understood thoroughly the whole art of building, having been trained to it in his youth, and I put myself under him, to serve my apprenticeship.

We began to erect the smaller houses of the station, after having selected a few smart youths who might learn the art of bricklaying and assist the older hands. From the smaller houses we proceeded to the hospital, and had a formal foundation-stone laying which was attended by the chief and numerous people. Then we began to tackle our most serious work, the building of a great church in the centre of the square. The church was to be big enough to hold about 2500 people, two rows of large Norman pillars and arches were to run along the nave, and we were to attempt two towers nearly seventy feet high. To do this, three-quarters of a million bricks were made, and great foundations five feet deep were dug. Then we proceeded apace, but the anxieties of that church were sometimes more than Mr. Henderson and I could stand. We were on the scaffolds all day. Frequently we could see messengers from our wives pursuing us up and down the ladders to summon us to a meal, but neither of us would be ready to rest, and we would keep the house-boys playing hide-and-seek after us while we moved about among the workers

A Brick Field

The clay is taken from the pit on the left after being well puddled, and is heaped as on the right. Thence it is borne to the moulders. The moist bricks are laid out to dry on the flat space behind the moulders, and are covered with grass to protect them from the sun and wind.

or got on to scaffolds which we knew were higher than any house-boy would venture to climb. We were building from sketch plans, without details, and so made some mistakes. One of these might have been very serious. The pillars supporting the arches seemed to us rather slim when we began to add the superincumbent wall, and we did not feel quite easy about them; but we thought they might do. Some days after the walls were up, and the carpenters had begun to knock out the arch "centres," I went into the church just after the two o'clock bell for resuming work had rung. Finding none of the workers at their places, I went out again to hurry them forward. Just as I passed out of the building I heard a noise like thunder, and ran back to see what had happened. One of the pillars had bent out, crushed under the weight which was resting on it, and down had come its arches and the whole line of arches which stretched away from it. The disaster was the work of a second. When we looked at the heap of debris our hearts were heavy lest any worker had been in time at his work and was now lying dead under this heap. It was with great thankfulness that we found that every one had been late, and not a man was in the building.

After so convincing a demonstration of the instability of our pillars, we pulled down the opposite row of arches and pillars also, and proceeded to make great interlacing foundations which ran across and along the church for each pillar that was to be erected. Then we doubled the thickness of our columns, and used only the best clay, and once more the arches and walls began to rise, and stand as they are to-day without the movement of an inch.

We had another great deliverance when we were building our towers. It was during the rainy season, and the workers had almost completed the north tower. On a scaffold at the top, about a dozen men and boys were engaged, and on each rung of a broad ladder, reaching from the ground to

the head of the tower, two boys were standing, handing up from one to the other the bricks and mud which the builders required. Altogether, over fifty workers were engaged on the tower. That forenoon as I was examining the church, I noticed a piece of work at the farthest end from the tower which had been scamped, and I took every worker off the tower to finish this job. An hour or two afterwards when I was sitting in the office along with two teachers doing translation work, there was a sudden flash of lightning, followed immediately by a dreadful clap of thunder. We ran out to see whether anything had been damaged, and found that the lightning had struck the north tower, smashed the top scaffolding to pieces, and ripped the great ladder from the top to bottom. It was with a great feeling of awe that all the workers gathered with me, and knelt down to give God thanks for their deliverance. What a dreadful calamity there might have been had I not removed them all from the tower shortly before! And we took care to remember that at morning prayers we had committed our work into the safe keeping of the Father.

At last the church was ready for occupation, and we celebrated its opening with a great convention. Three or four thousand people attended, mostly from those villages which we had so recently and so successfully stormed. We began with a musical festival, at which the various schools submitted new hymns. The words were chiefly taken from the book of Psalms, but the tunes were entirely native, old war-songs rescued from the oblivion of the past, and new compositions of lads with some taste for music. Most of their hymns are built up on the system of a short solo by the leader with the body of the people taking up the main song, and singing harmonious parts. The music is weird and fetching, and catches the native ear at once, and when once the tune is sung, every person in the audience seems to get hold of it and sing by the second verse. These festivals

were held annually, and after considerable weeding out we have gathered a great body of sacred music, which is largely used in church worship. How great an improvement this is on the adoption of English tunes, will be appreciated when we realize that the accent of native words, which is always on the penultimate, is ruined by English music, and that the native ear can only by long training grasp our metrical divisions. Musical experts tell me that our native system seems to be something like what the Greek scale must have been.

The church was packed daily by great audiences. The first day on which we counted our audience we found that three thousand had squeezed themselves into the building. But that was too dense a crowd, and we afterwards refused to allow more than two thousand five hundred to enter. What an audience we now had to preach to ! As the years passed, and intelligence increased, we received as deep inspiration from that responsive crowd as one could from a great congregation of Europeans. And their numbers have not diminished. Now we have a roofed platform outside the building, for we cannot receive under the church roof the audiences of five or seven thousand that assemble at our sacramental seasons.

CHAPTER XXII

A TOUR

THE work of station building made such constant demands on our time, that touring in the district was somewhat difficult, and prolonged absences were almost sure to be followed on one's return by vexatious days spent in re-organizing work that had gone wrong and unravelling tangled threads. But when Mr. Henderson was with us, one or the other was able occasionally to get away for the supervision and encouragement of the teachers at distant schools. In normal times one of the staff is almost always travelling, for the district we work extends about ninety miles from north to south, and a hundred and forty from east to west. These tours are the most delightful times of the year, when one always may be sure of physical and moral invigoration. There is no better medicine for pessimism, and for the dullness and irritation that may arise through prolonged and grinding work on the station, than two or three weeks at the head of a caravan tramping among the village schools. The daily change of scene, the overflowing hospitality of the villagers, the physical renewal that comes from long tramps, and the evident progress made in some of the villages, make one's outlook as bright and sparkling as a healthy man's should be. I will therefore try to transcribe some notes of a short commonplace tour, which may give some idea of its interest.

One day I set off with about a dozen carriers, six of whom were reserved for carrying the machila, or hammock, in which I might rest when tired, and be carried along at a swinging trot. The others carried tent, and bed, and food-stuffs. These "boys" being fed largely by the hospitality of the people in whose villages we stayed, cost me each twopence a day in wages, so that each day I was out my expenses came to about two shillings.

We had been travelling through thick bush for some hours, winding in the most tortuous fashion among old village sites, and around garden boundaries, when we struck a hoed road. This was a sure sign that the village school was not far off, and it had the great advantage that we could not get lost on it, and need lose little time, for it ran on as straight as an arrow. But it had also two great disadvantages. First, it took every ant-hill on its line, and although a détour of two yards would have brought it round the base of the ant-hill, it ran on without a bend up to the summit of the heap and down again. In the second place, machila travelling was attended with serious risks to the recumbent passenger, for the road was unfinished and rendered dangerous by the stumps of cut trees about three feet high, which stood dotted over it—just a convenient height to rip the machila under one's back and bruise one's sides black and blue.

By and bye, boys and girls appeared running along the road to give us a warm welcome. They were immensely proud of the road they had made, and listened eagerly to hear it praised. So we had to speak of its merits and, meanwhile, be dumb as to its defects. Half-a-mile farther on, the road ended at the school playground, and we entered the school to see its condition before going on to the village. It is a log-house about seventy feet long and eighteen broad, thatched, and lit from one side by openings in the wall. The other side is hermetically sealed against the prevailing south-

east wind. The interior, which has a raised platform of hard dry mud at one end, and a reed table, is elaborately decorated with clays of different colours, the lower half of the wall being red, the upper half white. Numerous crude figures of leopards, antelopes, cocks, etc., are painted on the white background. This is a new art, for, at first, these people had no paintings and could not understand the flat representation of things, their present attempt at drawing having an interesting likeness to the bushman's paintings. The floor is of beaten mud, and is smeared with cow's dung to destroy vermin and keep down the dust; against the walls stand a few seats made of logs with holes bored in them into which are thrust sticks to serve as legs.

When we entered the village we were met with a scene of wild excitement. The old *induna* who is head of this group of villages is over ninety years of age. He was in the first company that crossed the Zambesi with Zongwendaba, and was then a small boy. His heart overflows with good-will, and when I sat down beside him, he caught my hands and kissed them repeatedly. The people crowded around, but at a respectful distance, calling out their noisy welcome, and the eldest son, who was very excited with beer, and frequently is subject to mad fits, dashed about in restless energy. This irresponsible man has assumed charge of his father's villages, for the old man is not able to move about much, and he keeps things in a ferment. My coming always excites him inconveniently. The last time I was here I spoke to the assembled people in the village about going to school regularly. When I had finished, a zealous young blacksmith got up and began to say that wisdom was for the old as well as for the young, and that the old should leave off drunken habits. But he had not got far before the mad son rose in a wild passion, and yelled that he would kill him for his impudence. He stripped off his cloth and fell on the ground naked, and

ploughing his face and body in the loose grey soil till he was covered with dust, he snorted like a wild bull, and then rushed to his hut to get his spears. When he came back with them he had to be forcibly held until he was quieted.

Sometimes, when the madness is on him he sets fire to the houses, or runs into the kraal and stabs the cattle. Many a time the people wanted to kill him, for he troubled them, but his father forbade them. Yet he has been our great friend. His wild energy compelled the people to build their school, and makes them liberal with food for the teachers. He had heard that I might arrive the day before, and refused to touch beer all day. But when I did not come he lost hope, and now had been drinking and was very excited.

Shortly after my arrival a meeting was held in school, and Kampupu, the madman, sat quietly with me on the platform. In the middle of my address, when I had been speaking of the hatred which Christ's goodness raised, Kampupu's heart began to overflow, and he insisted on speaking to the people. With difficulty I got him to remain silent, but no sooner was the meeting closed than he jumped to his feet, and began a most excited and disconnected harangue.

That night several people who were waiting to be received into the catechumens' class came to me for a personal interview, and I spent an hour or two with them examining their knowledge and faith. When bedtime came it was hard to sleep at first. People were continually passing and re-passing the tent, and in the dark they would forget about the tent ropes, and go tripping over them. At last the crisis came in the early hours of the morning, as it seemed to me, when an old lady, carrying a pot of beer on her head, came crash over the ropes, smashed her pot, and spilled all her beer. I called from the interior asking whether she was

hurt, and regretting the accident, and then turned over and slept till dawn.

Before the sun was yet up I was wakened by the same old lady standing outside my tent relating to each passer-by the story of her fall and my apology, with great detail and picturesqueness. By sunrise she had told her story a dozen times.

The school assembled at seven in the morning and it was a treat to see. It had only been two sessions in existence, but there were already several lads able to read the Bible in a slow fashion. Some school methods were corrected, but, on the whole, pupils and teachers were worthy of praise. Kampupu was in and out of school, tremendously elated, and twice interrupted my labours with public orations. The only person I saw who could effectually tame him was one of his wives. I overheard her lash him sorely with a string of bitter words, under which he cowered.

At ten o'clock we struck camp and went on about four miles to another school. A heap of bricks on the playground proclaimed the fact that the people here were ambitiously beginning to make bricks that they might build an enduring school; but they had not got much farther than the start. The village itself was large and beautifully clean. Unfortunately, beer was flowing, and the exuberance of the welcome was discounted by the evidence of the exciting cause. When night fell the state of drunkenness got worse and worse, and the noise of tongues was earsplitting. The poor little babies were crying badly through it all.

For the sober we had one or two meetings, and then I spent some time interviewing candidates for baptism. About nine o'clock, somewhat fatigued with a long day's work, I sat by a fire and listened to the boys telling animal fables with running choruses throughout, and, encouraged

by my presence, and the diligence of my pencil and note-book seizing a treasure of words, the fables went on far into the night.

After examining this school in the morning, and not being over-pleased with the conditions I found there, and the irregularity of the pupils, we marched two hours farther on, and arrived at a little tumbling building which was packed with an afternoon school. There is a curious see-saw experience in school visitation. One never seems to see too many good schools in succession, nor too many bad ones. The bitter is well mixed with the sweet. Over-elation is sure to get a check at the next place you visit, and so also is over-depression. It was so here, for after the morning school this one was a delight. The classes were all full, and all intensely eager, and it was a stimulating thing to see married men and women in the reading classes. Here they were talking of building a new school, and I gave them what advice I could on their plans. Then I spent the evening examining candidates for baptism, whose clear intelligence cheered me immensely. At night the sound of hymn singing came from several huts. It was sweeter music than that of the drunken revelry of the previous night. Evidently there was a wave of deep religious fervour in that village.

Next morning leaving much warmth and hospitality, we passed on to our next school, and pitched the tent in the middle of a large and closely-built village. The chief, Chinde, a son of Mombera, was then a young fellow of much energy, and ambition. He took me to see the brick-school he had built, and the brickfield where he had prepared material for his own house. I showed him how to burn his bricks and started the erection of a kiln. (The house was built some months after, but both Chinde and his builder had too much beer to sustain them in their efforts, and when it was finished it was found that the windows were in curious wavy

lines that wanted to meet at a point, the doorway had been forgotten, and the only entrance was by a window, and the walls had so toppling an appearance that they could not bear a roof, and soon collapsed.)

Chinde had at that time a wretched murder case on his hands. A woman of his village had been killed in very cruel circumstances in the village of a neighbouring induna, the same who had years before demanded guns from me that he might follow his Senga slaves. The murder was committed during a beer carousal, of course, and the culprit had escaped. The case had become very troublesome, as the young chief refused to receive any other propitiation than the delivery up to him of the murderer, and the induna professed to be unable to find him. He asked me to try to get the induna to arrest the culprit, and talk the case, so I sent him a note telling him to busy himself and get the ugly matter settled.

Next day was Sunday, and we had very full services, with audiences peculiarly still and sober. One was able to speak on some of the deepest truths of Christianity and see the people intelligently responding, and not a few professed that day to renounce evil and yield themselves to Christ. These spiritual rewards are not suddenly reached. The head teacher explained the atmosphere when he said that for a month back they had been holding daily meetings for prayer and Bible-reading.

But the night was broken with very different doings. The village had just gone to sleep when we were all roused by sounds of war-dancing at the kraal-gate, the beating of shields, and the chorus of men. In a few minutes the whole village was out to see the cause of this disturbance. It was the neighbouring induna who had arrived with the murderer whom he had caught that evening. With him was a great company of armed men, who were letting off steam with their wild leapings and defiances. The criminal was sitting among

them, naked and tightly-bound to a long pole. In the moonlight it was a weird wild scene.

After a time the murderer was handed over to the chief, and was lodged in the kraal. His hands were most cruelly tied, and amid loud protests I cut the ropes with a knife, and warning the keepers that they must not maltreat their prisoner during the night, I turned in.

In the morning early the case was tried, and concluded about noon. Through a good part of the talking I sat on the ant-hill in the kraal listening to the evidence. It did not take long apparently to prove the guilt of the man, but it took a long time to settle the punishment. Hours were spent arguing the amount of compensation that should be paid. Chinde had no authority over the induna; he owed allegiance to another sub-chief. The only pressure therefore that could make a judgment operative, was that of the public conscience. Finally the case was settled, and the induna signified his acceptance of the decision by shouting Chinde's courtesy title. The death penalty was not inflicted, because I had warned Chinde about using such high powers without informing the Government of the Protectorate, though they had not yet begun to administer Ngoniland. The criminal was handed over to Chinde to be "a man" of his and live in his village, and the induna was fined three cows. When I asked Chinde why the induna was so harshly punished, he answered, "It is his business to make his people keep the peace. This he has not done. And is he not the 'father' of that murderer, and so must pay for his crime?" The culprit was a slave-man of the induna.

The school in this village was a pleasure to see, though I had some sore business in purging the classes of those who were unfit for the work they were professing. The reading classes were very large. It thrilled me to compare what I saw there, with the scenes of four years before when I had first opened this school. Then one could not have

found four yards of calico in the whole village, or many ounces of beads among all the people. Now most of them were well dressed with an abundance of cloth, and the women seemed wealthy in strings of beads. But what impressed me was that air of intelligence, and confidence and quiet formerly so lacking. It was here I had first seen the dreadfully obscene dances of the people, but since that moonlit night there has never been another of these unholy revellings in that kraal. We left in the afternoon and moved south up the right bank of the Rukuru. There were plenty of villages here. Nearly all the people seemed to be Senga subjects of the Ngoni, and they were very friendly to us as we passed from village to village. Towards sunset we halted in a very dirty collection of huts, and prepared to pitch the tent. Before we could do so we carried out great sweeping operations to clear a few yards. The people were shy, and afraid to come near me.

At nightfall I induced the children to gather round the fire, and invited the older people to join them that we might talk, but their mouths were sealed with timidity. Then I began to tell them Bible stories. I made them tell their own story of the coming of death to the world, and then I told our story of Eden. No tale excites greater interest, and point by point the head man repeated it again to the people. The life of Jesus and His death roused their interest, and they made loud exclamations of horror at the crime of killing Him. Other stories followed, and then simple sentence hymns after the style of their own village songs, which they quickly learned.

When my turn was over their turn followed, and for an hour or two I sat listening to their song fables. But I was sorry afterwards that the Bible stories had not been the last on the programme, for the people had evidently been interested. At last we all went off to seek sleep. I had barely blown out the candle when there was a noise of my

BRICK-MAKING FROM AN ANT-HILL

The man standing highest in the picture hews the hard clay with a hoe. The women with calabashes pour water on the broken clay, and others puddle it into mud. Those in the pit are the puddlers.

carriers tumbling out of the old houses that had been given them to sleep in, and loud grumbles were audible : " The houses are biting." They had found the bugs too numerous, and for the rest of the night they lay down on the ground beside the fires and so escaped their enemies.

For the next two or three days we were marching along the hot valley of the Rukuru. Happily there was plenty of tree-shade, with pleasant places to rest in during the heat of the day. But when we arrived at the Mzimba river no relief could be greater. The sun had been particularly fierce, and the air very still, and that day we had gone nearly thirty miles before midday. What a gift of God that stream seemed to be, the first running water we had seen for a fortnight ! We lay prone on the sand of the shallow river, the reeds making some shade from the sun, and the cool water trickling over our bodies. This was compensation beyond expression.

It was the night of a total eclipse of the moon when we arrived at Ng'onomo's. Some hours before the sun went down I told him he would see a wonderful thing in the heavens that night, but the old warrior and his wives were very excited with beer, and paid little attention to what I said. When the evening fell songs and dances, the effervescence of beer, began throughout the village, and it was plain that we were going to have a rowdy night.

At last the grey shadow was seen creeping over the moon, and a chilling darkness began to grow deeper. The dances stopped, the songs grew fainter, and soon the whole village was wrapped in a profound and awed silence. Women sat under the eaves of their huts afraid to look up. Children crept inside to sleep by the fire.

As I went through the village I came on a group of lads standing with the teacher watching the progress of the eclipse. Seeing me, the teacher cried :

"These boys have been asking me what is happening to the moon."

"And what did you reply?" I asked, wondering what his explanation would be.

"Oh, I told them it was just the moon's work." An answer that showed no great depth of scientific knowledge, but yet indicated emancipation from superstitious fear.

Going along to Ng'onomo's courtyard, I found that he had retired early to sleep and had not seen the eclipse. I called him out, and with a little grumble he crept from his hut. When he looked at the moon he stared in dumb astonishment, and sat down.

"What is going to happen?" he cried. "Are we all to die?"

I explained simply, and by illustration, and when he had heard he said:

"And what does it mean? Is death coming? That is how the sun died on the day we crossed the Zambesi."

I saw that no more explanations would help, so I tried to use the awe that was over him. I told him that God was speaking to-night. With great solemnity he asked me what He said, and a number of his wives gathered near to hear.

"He is calling you to repent, and come to Him."

"What do you mean by repent?"

"To abandon your wickedness, and be a follower of Jesus."

"What wickedness?" he asked.

"Slaying of men."

"I have stopped it."

"Stealing."

"I never stole."

"What about the cattle and people you stole in the raids?"

"That was not stealing. I took what I found."

" God reckons it stealing. And to-night He sees that there is blood on your hands."

Turning to the teacher, who in his early days was often out with the *impis*, he said :

" But you, too, killed and took cattle."

" Yes," said the teacher ; " but now I believe that Christ has paid up my case, and God has forgiven."

" Well," returned Ng'onomo, " I, too, no longer kill and raid. What else must I give up ? "

" Your polygamy." The old man was still increasing his harem.

" Then who will cook for me ? "

" Your drunkenness."

" Beer is good. What else shall I eat ? I shall die of hunger."

" Your wrath. Every one trembles before you. Speak kindly and learn to love."

" Yes, that is good advice. I speak nothing but gentle words."

Here one of the wives broke in : " Yes, teacher, you have spoken truth now."

But Ng'onomo interrupted her with passion.

" Silence, you hussy, or I shall kill you ! Clear out of this, or I shall kill you ! " Whereupon she moved sulkily away.

" Now you are condemned out of your own mouth," I cried.

And so the discussion went on. While we were still in the middle of it the old head wife appeared in the courtyard with scared face.

" O white man," she cried, " are we all to die ? I want to die. I am tired out with my hoeing and my work. Let me die to-night."

But Ng'onomo was too awed to answer her roughly. When I left, his wives were begging him hard to allow them

to learn in school, for the teachers had only been permitted to come to his village on the condition that his wives should not be taught. And the last words I heard were from the chorus of his wives: "To-morrow we begin to go to school."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE COMING OF THE ADMINISTRATION

WHILE we were busy over the erecting of our station, and the evangelization of our district, the tribe was passing through a political crisis which ended happily in the British Government taking over its administration. For several years past every other tribe in the Protectorate had had resident British magistrates and paid an annual hut-tax of three shillings. The Northern Ngoni alone were exempt from this. As far back as 1896 Sir Harry Johnston had written to Dr. Elmslie, when trouble had arisen over the harbouring of a native chief who was a fugitive from justice. "Hitherto, the Ngoni chiefs have shown themselves capable of managing the affairs of their own country without compelling the interference of the administration of the Protectorate. They have maintained a friendly attitude towards the English and have allowed us to travel and settle unhindered in and through their country. As long, therefore, as the Northern Ngoni continue this line of conduct, and give us no cause for interference in their internal affairs, so long, I trust, they may remain exempt from taxation as they will put us to no expense."

The terms of this letter were read to the chiefs by Dr. Elmslie, and it was the basis of the relations in which the tribe stood to the administration.

But as the years passed, and Europeans were having more dealings with the people, and the executive power of

the chiefs ceased to be upheld by the terror of the spear, the situation became more complicated. The filibustering of Z—— had shown the necessity for some representative of the Government being in the land. Constant friction was arising from attempts by the Ngoni to follow runaways who escaped to the Lake or to other administered districts, and internal matters were not under good control. A trading store at Ekwendeni had been burned in the night, and for a long time the chiefs did not show much activity in tracing the incendiary. Crimes were being committed with impunity, and the strong were inclined to take advantage of the weak until we Europeans, and the oppressed among the people, longed for the coming of a protective administration. As missionaries, we had consistently refused to try native cases, and had sent them all on to the chiefs, though on several occasions we had to press the chiefs to do their duty, and on others we had to act as friendly arbitrators between strong chiefs who had quarrelled, and had no court of appeal.

In 1904, the necessity for having a resident officer of the Government in the tribe to administer its affairs became very evident through an unfortunate collision between native police and the Ngoni. A party of these police had come across the undefined boundary that separated the Ngoni and Tonga tribes, and began to collect hut-taxes, and to burn the villages of those who refused to pay. When matters were becoming threatening I interfered, and finding that the police were acting on their own initiative, and were not under the control of any responsible person, I sent them back to their headquarters with a note of explanation.

In consequence of my action, a Government inquiry was held, and an apology was made for the unauthorized raid of the police. At the same time the Governor, who had for some time been considering the advisability of annexing and administering Northern Ngoniland, decided to take imme-

diate steps in this direction, and we were asked to assist in calling together the chiefs and head men to meet him at Ekwendeni to talk over the whole situation. We loyally did so, and I went through to Ekwendeni to be present at this most important *indaba*.

When Sir Alfred Sharpe, who had early experience of the Ngoni, arrived, he did the wisest thing possible. He approached them through their known friends, the missionaries, and he came accompanied by his wife, and without the display of a single soldier. That was the guarantee of peace, and immensely impressed the people. All the great chiefs and indunas, together with thousands of their men, had assembled, and sat in a huge circle awaiting the Governor. As is their custom in talking important cases, every man was fully armed.

Before going to meet the chiefs, Sir Alfred was good enough to lay all his proposals before Mr. Stuart and myself, and to ask us for suggestions. Then he went out to the great assembly. Lady Sharpe and Mrs. Stuart sat there among the people, the only women in the whole crowd, and their presence was as good as a declared pledge that the Government's intentions were all for peace.

Using a mission teacher as his interpreter, Sir Alfred laid before the chiefs his proposal to put a Government official among them, who would strengthen their hands in administering justice to the people. He proposed selecting the paramount chief and half a dozen other great chiefs to be a council for the British official. These chiefs would be subsidized.

The proposals were put to the chiefs and indunas and their opinions invited. They were almost immediately accepted, and with much heartiness. A number of problems involved in the coming of the administration were then presented by the leaders. They wanted to know what their powers would be ; how they would control the scattering slave popula-

tion ; how it would affect their liberty to migrate to richer territory, how a chief's judgment could be made final ; how dissatisfied litigants might be prevented from playing off one chief against another, and then the Boma against all ; how it would affect their hunting rights, and so on.

With great tact and patience, Sir Alfred answered all the questions, making some concessions which were immensely popular. Two arrangements which he announced seized the imagination of the people, and produced great satisfaction. The one was that no old quarrels would be raised, or would be heard in court, a new book was to be opened that day, and the past was to be forgotten. And the other was that the police force would be composed of Ngoni only.

Throughout this critical *indaba*, Sir Alfred Sharpe showed that he had been at pains to understand and appreciate the people, and his first words had disarmed suspicion, and produced a quiet and favourable attention. With great wisdom he refrained from interfering with the constitution of the tribe, but rather insisted that the magistrate would come to guide and strengthen present authority. He warned the chiefs against the taking of bribes and the distorting of justice. He assured them that His Majesty's Government had not, and never would have designs to take their cattle from them. And finally, he promised that he would send among them a man of wisdom and experience, in whom they would at once have confidence. The gathering closed about sunset with the usual giving of thanks and war-dancing.

Next day the Government party left, and the chiefs and people returned to their homes, and so on this second day of September, 1904, we saw the days of unchecked lawlessness pass away for ever, and the country come under a strong and paternal British Government.

Perhaps I should record that after the Commissioner returned to Zomba he wrote to me. " I know well that we

could not have arrived at such satisfactory results but for your previous excellent work in the country."

No one was so relieved as we missionaries were. We occupied an unpleasant and anomalous position in this tribe which acknowledged no resident authority, and we were constantly in danger of getting into unhappy misunderstandings either with the people or with the administration; at the same time we saw with distress many people being oppressed and grievously wronged by their stronger enemies, and could show them no way of redress. The coming of a resident magistrate removed all these difficulties, and allowed us freer minds for concentrating on our first work.

Shortly after this, Mr. H. C. Macdonald was sent to administer the affairs of the tribe, and he has been here ever since. The Governor could not have made a better choice, for he sent a man whose colonial life has taught him to appreciate the independent spirit of the Ngoni, and to respect their institutions. He is also possessed of infinite patience, and a distinct kindliness to the people. And we have been peculiarly favoured by the succession of assistant collectors who have been sent here, and who have for short periods controlled the affairs at the Boma when the magistrate was on leave, or have assisted him when in the country. They have consistently showed the estimable qualities of justice, and of appreciation of the best in native life.

It has greatly facilitated the adjustment of civil matters, and increased the loyalty of the people to the British Government that one official, accessible and sympathetic, has been left in charge for many years. He has become known and trusted, and is the visible representative of the administration. The native cannot be expected to appreciate the justice or power of an impersonal Government which is not represented in any known individual. The present system of continually rotating the magistrates in charge of other districts in Nyasaland seems to me to be wasteful and

full of weakness and danger. No official has time to know his people or become known to them before he is sent to another tribe entirely different in history and constitution, and this change never ends. In Ngoniland we have been spared it, and the long residence of Mr. Macdonald has helped the people to be more loyal, and to come to him to seek advice and state their difficulties.

For the first year no taxes were imposed on the tribe. But on the second year the usual three-shilling tax was levied. There was no opposition to it, although, of course, as many as possible tried to avoid it, and like good British subjects, every one grumbled about paying it. Last year this tax yielded over three thousand pounds.

The chiefs still try their own village cases, but many know that they are surer of justice at the hands of the white man, and they bring their cases to him. On the monthly court days, the subsidized chiefs take their turn and sit two at a time with the magistrate as assessors. Unlike most Central African tribes, the authority of the chiefs has not disappeared with the coming of a white magistrate. Partly from long usage and loyalty, partly by the active co-operation of Government, they still exercise a considerable control over their people.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE DEATH OF A CHIEF

THE years 1907 and 1908 were full of tragedy to the tribe, for one after another the old notables died, and the conspicuous links with the great days of the past were broken and lost. Some of these deaths were coincident with unusual natural phenomena, and it was curious to see how these served to strengthen current superstition. For example, one of the explanations of an earthquake is that the dead are shouting at the coming of a great chief, and the earth trembles at his welcome. The rumbling is the sound of their cries of reverence.

Now, it so happened that on the day we landed at Bandawe in August, 1907, on our return from our second furlough in Scotland, there was an unprecedented series of earthquakes. In twelve hours we counted about twenty-two tremors, and frequently they were so violent that we all rushed out of our houses to escape the danger of being hurt by a falling building. When we got up to the hills we learned that there had been wild alarm among the Ngoni, because of the frequency and violence of the earthquakes ; and on that day the famous old warrior, Ng'onomo, had died. When the news of his death spread through the land there was no difficulty in explaining the recent fearful occurrences.

Two or three months after, when it was the height of the dry season, and the weather was very hot, there was a violent shower of hailstones one day, and the same evening a messenger came in to announce the death of Maurau, a brother

of Mombera and a great chief in our neighbourhood. The hailstorm was at once explained by their belief that some portent happens when a great chief dies.

On hearing of Maurau's death, I went out to express my grief. His district is about twelve miles from this station. All the way along I was surprised to find every village deserted, and all the possessions of the people carried away. When I asked for an explanation of this, I was told that it was for fear of the depredations that might be committed by mourning parties going to the funeral. And, indeed, the precautions were necessary, for we found that we had been preceded by more than one company, and goats had been lifted, houses broken into, and some unfortunate people grievously hurt.

When we arrived at the village, my carriers went ahead and stood weeping aloud, and then we all passed into the wide kraal. Hundreds of men were sitting round, all in dead silence. After having spoken some words of sympathy to the sons, I sat down among the men and waited developments. By and by, some one came in to the kraal and made an announcement which immediately led to the men seizing their shields and spears and filing quickly out of the kraal until only a few of us were left with the chief mourners. Soon I saw that on all the ant-hills armed men were standing, looking down the valley. I asked what was the cause of the excitement, and was told that a certain relative of the dead chief, a man of notorious violence, was said to be nearing the village, and that he was coming "in wrath" to avenge the death of the chief. So the men had got out of the kraal in order that if there should be a fight, it might, at least, be in the open. The rumour of his arrival, however, proved to be premature. Instead of him there came our local chief and friend, Muzuku-zuku.

After I had spent some hours in the broiling sun, I rose to go home, but first talked with Muzuku-zuku and asked

him to do his best to prevent any violence. His intervention was soon required, for shortly after my departure the angry relative arrived, accompanied by a long procession of his people, and prepared to exhibit his loyalty to the dead by fighting. Before long, the villagers and his people were at one another, and several light spears were thrown. But Muzuku-zuku rushed in between the contending parties and compelled the relative to stop his disturbance, and enter the kraal as a peaceable mourner.

This was the first time I had witnessed the wild scenes that are apt to arise on the death of a prominent chief. Of course, it is part of the system of a barbarous society which makes the life of the ruler sacred, and surrounds him with customs which safeguard him from the dangers of poisoning, neglect, or treachery. But a few months after I was to see the whole of this wild barbarity when Muzuku-zuku himself was summoned by Death.

He had been seized by pneumonia. Two or three years before my wife had pulled him through a severe attack of the same disease. It had been a grave time for him, because he had all the natural disabilities which handicap a drunkard. But the memory of his past recovery gave him a pathetic confidence in my wife, and he sent to tell her of his sickness. When she went out and examined him, she saw there was no hope unless he came to the station and put himself under her immediate nursing. This he agreed to do, but with the proviso that he should not be lodged in the hospital. There is a strong prejudice against the hospital, partly because so many men who have gone south to the Rhodesian mines have died in hospital, and partly because of the fear that as the beds and blankets of those who have died under treatment are not burned or buried with the dead, they may be used again for the living. Accordingly we prepared another little house for the sick chief, and refusing to be carried, weak as he was, he walked in to the station.

On Sunday he was dangerously ill. When I went along to see him at nine o'clock he was sitting up, leaning against one of his wives, breathing with difficulty, and with a very feeble pulse. The room was full of his wives and sons and others; nearly thirty people had crowded in, and he was giving them farewell messages, while all wept. With some difficulty we got most of the crowd to go outside, and let fresh air in.

The station was full of people who had come to worship, but all were sitting in silent, depressed groups. I felt it impossible to preach, but I told Muzuku-zuku we would go to the church and pray for him. So we had a short service, during which many of the people prayed aloud for their chief.

When we came out of church, my wife met me, and reported a slight improvement in his condition. But all day she sat with him except for short intervals when I relieved her. He was very restless, and breathing painfully. Frequently he charged certain people with poisoning him, and laid the blame of his sickness on those who had been concerned in the sin of one of his daughters, who had recently died in childbirth. I prayed with him, and tried to speak to him about eternal things, and he always joined with me in prayer. One time he murmured, "God is almighty, and He will hear our prayers if we would only believe." It was pathetic to hear him cry to my wife, "Save me! Save me!" And one time he looked out towards the church and said with some hope, "Fraser is in the church praying for me."

In the afternoon, Mombera's sister, whose regent Muzuku-zuku was, arrived, and to her he again repeated his charges of witchcraft. The head induna sat very silent, making no remark and listening to everything. But when he went out of the room I heard him shouting with venom at the induna, whose people had been charged. "It's you who have killed him, you sorcerers."

Next morning the crisis was over and the patient was quieter, and when my wife came to the house for lunch at midday she was hopeful, and thought that with rest he should do well. But she had no sooner left him than visitors began to crowd in again and arouse fresh excitement in him, with the result that shortly after, we were startled by one of his men coming running to us to say that Muzuku-zuku was dead. We hurried along to the house, and there found his wives round him weeping, and closing his eyes and mouth.

There was nothing more that we could do, and my wife returned home, while I wandered about the station. Presently, we saw the sons coming along from the village at a quick trot with their hands clasped behind their backs, and weeping aloud. A little in their rear came several of the villagers, all wailing noisily. As soon as they began to enter the room I noticed one of my joiners seizing their spears and clubs and taking them forcibly from them. Then I realized that there was danger of violence, and I hurried along to the little house where the body was lying.

By this time the noisy, wailing crowd was gathering about the door. Presently the eldest son came out raving wildly, four men holding on to him. They struggled together. Blood was coming from his mouth and he was in a state of ungovernable passion of grief and rage. I spoke to him and laying my hand on his shoulder tried to quiet him. For a moment he was still, but as soon as I turned from him he was off again in a wild struggle, the men holding on to him desperately, and rolling over and over on the ground as they struggled with his unnatural strength.

While this wild scene was going on, I saw a young man coming up the road, dragging along four others who were trying to control him. To my horror I recognised the young chief whose suzerainty Muzuku-zuku acknowledged. He was raving like a madman, foaming at the mouth, and

shouting incoherently. In this condition he made his way into the house, and presently came out more violent than ever.

Meanwhile, the excitement outside was getting worse and worse. Women were rolling in the dust, wailing aloud. Wild groups were struggling with youths, frantic with grief and rage. Some were shouting that the chief had been killed, others were trying to get back the spears of which they had been deprived. And the mad noise was dreadful. Two or three of my elders went into the house and told the people to get the body removed to the village at once. So in a few minutes it was put into a hammock and the bearers went off at a quick trot. After them the whole company of the mourners followed, wailing dreadfully, and with them went the sons and others still struggling with those who would restrain them, or being carried off in a collapsed condition by their sympathizers. They went first to the head village, the village of the chief's dead mother, and laid the body in her hut there.

I would have followed with the others at once, but was advised to wait a little. While I was still impatiently waiting, one of the men who had been accused of sorcery came to me, along with his brother.

"They will kill my brother," he said. "If they strike him, I will strike back."

"No, you won't," I said, "you will keep out of the road, and be quiet."

He stood still and then answered, "There you puzzle me. Must I not defend him? How can I allow him to be killed?"

But he quietly obeyed, and stayed on the station. Around these two, especially, the whole storm was raging. They had been accused of assisting the daughter who had gone wrong. And the case was still being talked when the chief was taken ill. It lay heavy on his spirits, and again and

PATIENTS AT THE MISSION HOSPITAL

The man's beard is plaited and ornamented with beads. The woman has large disc leaden ear ornaments. The scars on her breast are the marks of the medicine man's bleedings in former days.

again he accused them of causing his death, for in the native mind there is a deep connection between moral offence and physical evil. And when a dying chief accuses others of bewitching him and causing his death, no mercy is likely to be shown to the accused. In the old days they and all their connections would instantly have been put to death.

I now followed the procession quickly, for I saw that there would be fighting in the village. As I entered it the first man I saw was the chief induna gesticulating wildly and bringing vehement accusations. I put my hand on him and told him to be quiet and to quieten the people, or the Government would hold him responsible for any harm that might be done. In a moment he obeyed, and went along with me.

Around the hut where the dead chief was lying hundreds of people were wailing and shrieking. Now and then some of the sons would dash wildly about shouting for their spears, while some of the Christians gripped their arms and tried to restrain them. At one point one of them got hold of a spear, and he swung about dragging with him half a dozen men who tried to take it from him. I tried to speak to him and make him give it up, but he would not listen.

At last, with the help of my elders, I got all the sons and the chief induna to come apart that I might speak to them. I told them, when we had sat down, that if they had any charges to make against any one they must reserve them and be quiet, and after the funeral a full inquiry could be made. But meanwhile this noise would not bring back their father to life, and if blood was shed now it would not quickly be stopped. After a little quiet talking they promised to behave themselves. All the time the air was rent by the continuous crying of hundreds of people, and as others from the near villages joined them the noise became wilder and wilder. The eldest son now sat quietly weeping beyond

the surging crowd, and I sat beside him trying to calm him. Once or twice the old induna came along, and kissed the lad and wept aloud, and then rolled at my feet and lay there sobbing.

The announcement of the death having now been made by bearing the corpse to the village of the chief's mother, the people proceeded to take it forth again and carry it to his own village, where it would be buried. The distance was only a few hundred yards, and thither the whole multitude followed. When the body had been laid in the hut of his chief wife the wailing rose noisier than ever. How much of it was genuine grief, how much the contagion of hysteria, one could not say. But the strenuous efforts of some people to cry with great bitterness only emphasized the fact that they had been involved in the suspicions, and were weeping out of defence to show that they were as sorry as any. I pitied them badly, for there was terror in their crying.

Presently I saw a wild commotion in one corner. Women were tearing at some poor creature, men were pushing forward with their clubs to get a stroke at her, and I rushed among them to stop them. It was a wife of the chief, mother of the poor girl who had died in childbirth. She, too, had been accused of complicity, her presence in the wailing crowd had caused some excitement, and they were trying to kill her. A bodyguard of Christians were round her defending her, but she had received some ugly wounds. We got her out of the tornado of passion, and sent her away under charge of some of the Christians to be in safe keeping on our station, and get attended to by my wife.

At last I demanded silence, and asked that the wailing should stop for a time. With vigorous shouting the men got the female part subdued, and then I spoke a few words, urging them to keep the peace and control themselves. And then I prayed. After this the scene quieted down, perhaps from the sheer reaction of exhaustion, and I returned home,

well assured that the worst was over and there would be no more riot in the village.

Next morning early I was back among them. The loud weeping was still going on. The kraal was filled with men, and every few minutes new mourning parties were arriving. I spoke with some of the church elders and suggested that I should call all the Christians together and remind them that they must be peacemakers and make no charges against any one. But they said, "You need not speak to the Christians. None of them broke the peace, or made any charges. Speak with the old men and the sons."

So I went to the kraal and talked with them, explaining the natural and simple causes of the death, and warned them against making any charges against others which they could not substantiate, and urged on them their duty of keeping the people quiet. To all this they agreed. But they denied charging any one, though I told them that with my own ears I had heard them doing so. They said that the people who had fled were their own accusers. Why had they fled if their hearts did not condemn them ? But they gave their word that they would keep the village in control, and with this I returned home. A goodly number of people had taken refuge on the station till the danger of violence should be gone. And numbers of others were coming in carrying great loads of household belongings which they wished us to keep for them until the funeral parties had passed.

Meanwhile the *basukuru* (i.e. those who had held the body in death, and were now constituted the priests of the departed spirit) had washed the face of the dead chief. A cow had been killed in the kraal, and carefully flayed so that its entire skin formed a bag, and into this the corpse had been put. The flesh of the cow was burned that this savoury smell might cover the smell of decomposition which had already set in. Messengers had been sent to all the great

chiefs to announce the death. And the people prepared themselves against reprisals of any chief who might come to avenge the death. All the men sat in the kraal, their spears and shields beside them, and there they slept each night ready for action. In all the neighbouring villages the men did likewise, that if the central kraal was attacked they might come to the rescue. From the routes that the great chiefs might take the people fled and took with them their belongings, for by native custom no guilt attaches to thefts, and even murders, committed by the passing mourners. But little violence was done, for now the British Government were administering the land, and their presence overawed some who would uphold the old traditions.

On Monday evening I had sent to the Boma, about eighteen miles off, to inform Mr. Macdonald, the magistrate, of the death of the chief and the somewhat high feeling that threatened disorder. And he had immediately come through to express his sympathy with the villagers, and that his presence might make for order. But it was not till Thursday that the grave was finished and all the necessary arrangements completed. The place for the grave was pointed out by the eldest daughter of the head wife, whose sons were all dead. And thus the succession was claimed for her house. It was dug within the kraal right opposite the house where the body lay, and the kraal fence between had been broken down.

When Mr. Macdonald and I went up to the village we found that they were still awaiting the representatives of the paramount chief before they could go on with the burial. Had it taken place before he or his representatives arrived, there would have been a serious quarrel. But after being awaited some time they appeared under the leadership of Mombera's old prime minister.

As each party of mourners arrived they walked round to the house where the body was, and raising their shields

above their heads they cried in a heartrending wail, "My father! my father!" Then they went into the kraal and, looking towards the grave, repeated the same long cry, and when they had wept for some minutes they sat down silently near the kraal fence. Outside all the cattle from all the villages of the chief had been gathered together and left there that they might weep for their master. The little grass peaks, that look like diminutive chimneys, had been taken off the roofs of all the chief's houses, to indicate that the village was destroyed now that its head had gone.

We sat down on the great ant-hill in the kraal and patiently waited for the burial. Below us was the grave. It was dug very wide at the start, perhaps twelve feet wide, and terraced down in a series of platforms which were to be used as a ladder into the grave. From the bottom a tunnel had been dug stretching under the kraal. When all was finished the hard red earth of the floor and roof of the tunnel was carefully scraped and cleaned. Meanwhile we could see a number of dramatic acts going on about the death hut. The widows were moving slowly about on their hands and knees, following one another like four-footed beasts, their heads bound up in white cloths that covered their hair and forehead, and all ornaments had been stripped from their bodies. Then the daughters of the chief came out of the hut dressed with the dancing gear of their father. Wailing piteously, they flung themselves down at the mouth of the grave, and a great cry went up from the women in the village. When the girls had returned to the hut the widows issued forth. They were dressed with their husband's war ornaments. One had on his head-dress of cock feathers, others his hip tails, others carried his shield and clubs, and the daughter of the head wife carried his spear. They capered about, clumsily imitating his war dance, and intimating how fierce a warrior now lay dead. And so they

approached the grave and threw themselves down at its mouth weeping, and again the great sore cry went up from the women.

A number of men now went into the hut and bore forth the corpse. It was wrapped tightly in a blanket which covered the cow-hide bag in which it was laid, and the smell of putrefaction was very offensive. The bundle was laid at the entrance to the grave, while a long procession carrying all the chief's belongings assembled. They brought his shields and spears and war accoutrements, his musical instruments, clothes, dishes, stools, sleeping pillows, everything he had used, and laid them near the grave. Then the body was lowered and placed in the tunnel in a sitting posture, the face looking to the south—to the land from which the fathers of the chief had come.

Now the various belongings were torn into shreds, and what would not tear was hacked to pieces with an axe and all placed around the body. It was a process which lasted for hours. While it was still going on one of the brothers of the chief stood up to weep. Immediately all the men rose and, holding their shields over their heads, cried aloud, "My father! my father!" For many minutes they continued, the tears pouring down their faces. And so heart-rending a scene was it that neither of us Europeans could get down the choking lumps in our throats. The women in the village joined in the cry, and for miles around it could be heard: "My father! my father!"

And all the time the hacking up of the goods and their burial was going on.

When the people began to sit down again, exhausted with the violence of their grief, I asked for silence, and read some passages of Scripture and prayed. And while I was engaged there was a dead silence over the multitude.

After this little service was over we rose and left. As we walked together to the station, nearly a mile and a half

away, we could still hear the crying behind us all through our walk.

I do not intend to describe all that was done afterwards. This was an Ngoni burial, and the customs of it are those that came with them from the south, and may be found in any book that describes the stereotyped ritual of the Kaffir. I shall only mention one or two of the main acts.

When all was ready for the grave being filled the sons of the chief were called up, and each dropped a handful of earth into the grave, and then the people gathered round its edges and pushed the earth in until it was filled. A fence of small stakes was built around the heap of earth and stones that closed in the resting-place of the chief, and then all went to the river to wash.

But for days afterwards the sons and relatives slept in the open kraal beside the grave of their chief, ready at any moment to defend it. And all day they remained in the kraal together waiting for the return of messengers of the chiefs who were sent again to comfort them.

Within the hut of the chief wife the widows slept together. They busied themselves making long cords of bark which they bound into a widow's cap for their heads, and twisted into long strings to hang about their necks. When they moved about the village it was with a slow, sad step, with bowed bodies, and with their hands clasped behind their backs.

A "doctor" was called to kill a cow and make medicine to strengthen the young sons against the attack of disease. And its skin was cut into bracelets for the widows to wear.

A month or two after another cow was killed, and sacrifice made to the spirit of the departed chief. And a great ox was set apart to be the dwelling-place of his spirit, that he might live within his own village.

And when a year had passed, with great drinking of beer and beating of drums, the widows put off their mourning.

And when another year had passed, the chiefs and great men were called together that they might choose what widows were willing to go to them to be their wives.

For long after the villagers lived like those who had lost a father. There was a pathetic air of orphanage about them, and only the good the chief had done was remembered; the terror of his wild outbursts, before which many of them had trembled, was forgotten.

CHAPTER XXV

EVANGELIZING

THE vast majority of the converts to Christianity in Ngoniland have been won not by the immediate agency of the Europeans, but of the natives themselves. It is necessary for a healthy propagation that this service should not be delegated to foreigners, but should be the natural energy of the life of the church itself. There is something seriously wrong with the religion of the man who has been lifted out of heathenism if it does not exercise an unconscious influence on his community, as well as compel him to declare articulately to the heathen around him the greatness of the salvation that has come to him. A spiritual laity must necessarily be as lights in a dark world.

From the earliest days we have sought to enlist the services of those who have themselves learned. Intelligent youths who could read were told to teach others the alphabet; some voluntary work was found for every earnest Christian. Consequently a vast number of simple agencies for the spread of our faith was set a-going, and it is to these primarily that we must trace the great spread of Christian truth in the land.

Schools have been the great pioneers of Christianity. They have grown at a somewhat alarming pace, for now there are nearly two hundred of them established among the Ngoni. Of course, the reader must relieve his mind of all European standards of education when he thinks of these

primitive educational institutions, for we are not far yet from the elementary stages in their evolution.

When I came out first a goodly part of the schools then in existence were not even housed. The scholars met at the gate of the cattle kraal or in some tidied open space. Villagers could pass their idle time sitting about on the outskirts, amusing themselves with what they reckoned the eccentricities of the teachers and pupils. Goats and sheep charged into the classes, distracting all attention, and sometimes a snarling couple of dogs preparing for combat would send a class flying. In these days schools were little more than tolerated, and villagers were still unwilling to make any sacrifice for the possession of educational facilities. At first we had to beg chiefs to allow us to open a school, but the day soon came when chiefs came to us, at the instigation of their people, to beg us to send teachers to them. This desire for education allowed us to force on the spirit of self-help, and now we are able to refuse to start a school until the people agree to erect their own building and keep it in repair, to pay a slight fee for education, and to buy their own books.

Our teachers are native lads who have been trained in the village school. They begin work when they have reached the stage of being able to read the vernacular fluently, to do simple arithmetic, and to write. Then they are enrolled as monitors, and are paid perhaps one and sixpence a month. Year by year these junior helpers are taught by their senior teacher, and he in turn is helped forward partly by a highly-trained teacher from the Institution and partly by attendance for a month at the annual teachers' school at the European station. The average senior teacher does not get more than five or six shillings a month in pay. That seems an absurdly small figure, but we must remember that school is only held for seven or eight months in the year, and that in the other months the teacher is engaged in pre-

paring his own garden and attending to his village duties. He has therefore a house and sufficient food-stuffs for the year, apart from anything he may earn as a teacher, and his wealth in cash is in excess of that of the ordinary villager.

To superintend the great network of schools connected with a single European station it has been necessary to divide the whole area into groups of twelve or fifteen schools. Each of these groups is placed under the superintendence of a highly-trained schoolmaster who has taken a full normal course at the Institution, and he constantly moves about his circuit, guiding the efforts of the village teacher and reporting every month in detail to the European.

One must acknowledge that the schools are still far from ideal. The teachers are not yet able to use their educational opportunities, and an adequate supply of material for efficient teaching is not provided. The chief value of these village schools is a religious one. All who conduct them are professing Christians, and they permeate their teaching with religious instruction and worship. In the earlier days especially, they were far in advance of the other natives in character and outlook. Their abstention from beer and evil dances, their emancipation from superstition and fear of the witch doctor, their bodily cleanliness and their clothing, all combined to raise them far above the level of the ordinary villager, and give them a considerable authority. Day by day at morning service, and in the religious instruction of the school, they were able to teach with some intelligence the Bible stories and the life of Christ, thereby giving to the people an altogether new idea of God and the relation of men to Him.

It must be plain to the reader that no very subtle argument is necessary to present the Gospel to the heathen of these regions. The barriers which evangelism has to surmount are not so much those of faith as those of morals. There is no organized and hoary religious system, no inter-

ested priestly cult to oppose the message we bring. Instead of this we find a people feeling after God, and deeply conscious that a thick mist hides the full light from them. Our attitude is not that of the iconoclast, nor do we call their spirits devils and their prayers blasphemies. The God, Maker of heaven and earth, whom they named but could not explain, is our God, and we teach that He "whom they ignorantly worshipped" is fully revealed in Christ to the obedient heart.

One of my evangelists was holding a service one Sabbath in a village near Loudon, and finding that none but young people were present he went to the kraal gate and there found all the old men.

"Who used to lead the worship of the village?" he asked.

"The men," they replied.

"How is it, then, that to-day I find none but young people worshipping?"

"We do not understand about your God. It is all new, and we have not learned."

"But the God we declare is the God you worshipped. Come and honour Him."

"We thought He was a new God of the European. Yes, we will come," they answered. And from that day they were present at all the services, devoutly joining in the worship.

This evangelist, it seems to me, stated an essential truth. The God whom we preach is not a new European deity, but He who had not left Himself without a witness, "for the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity." And as we proceed to open up many another eternal truth we shall find in native faith not a few seedlings, dwarfed and sickly indeed, yet the beginnings of those great spreading trees which shall attain their symmetry and fruitfulness in the clearer light of the Gospel.

To the truth of the moral law I do not think we ever

find contradiction. It is already reasonable to the native, and often one has heard the old people utter emphatic approval, especially of the fifth and seventh commandments. Of course, verbal assent is often given to laws to which conduct has not become conformed, and then the law is sore and unpopular.

On one occasion a teacher was speaking on the seventh commandment when a man in the audience cried out :

" You lie ; these words are not written in the book ! "

" Yes, they are," he answered ; " and if you do not keep this commandment God holds you guilty."

" You lie," cried the man angrily, " and if you will not be quiet I shall burn down the school," and with this threat he rushed out of the building in a great passion.

Next morning he came to the teacher very humbly to confess his sin. He had been guilty of a grave breach of the law, and the words spoken were hitting him so painfully that he could not sit quiet.

The laws against murder and theft were never disputed, although they were contrary to the raiding habits of the people. They were accepted as God's word, and I doubt not the hearers' consciences told them they were true, for within the tribe violation of these laws was punished severely enough, though the same protection was not extended to the weaker tribes beyond.

But of all truth none was welcomed and listened to with greater avidity than that about everlasting life. The desire to know what was beyond the grave, and to overcome the terrors of death, made our teaching peculiarly welcome. And one has found that, perhaps more than any other revelation we had to give them, this one has drawn people to Christ.

The Person of Jesus, too, has always been attractive. They easily recognize the greatness of the redemption His death has brought them, and the goodness and patience and power of His life on earth appeal to their love of what is

admirable in a noble man. But, like all human beings, they find it easy to yield their approval to all His goodness, but not so easy to yield their lives to His obedience.

Two great social evils have necessarily received a good deal of attention. The one is polygamy, and the other drink. With polygamy we make no compromise, for we maintain that its presence in the tribe is wholly evil. There never can be home life as long as polygamy is tolerated, and for the purity of the Church of the future it is necessary that homes be created, and that monogamy be plainly declared to be the Christian order. For younger people I do not think that the dissolution of polygamous unions involves any great hardship, for the wives return to their parents and, if they desire, soon marry again; but for old people who have lived for long years as man and wife it may not be easy. Yet it is not expedient that we make exceptions in their cases. We must acknowledge that some of them may be within the kingdom of God, although we cannot receive them into the fellowship of the Church. Various circumstances may make monogamy almost impossible for them; but, after all, "strait is the gate," and the way to life leads by the Cross. We shall confer no benefit on the individual or on the race if we make the gate wider and take away the cross which some must bear.

Towards the beer habit the native Church has taken up a very clearly defined attitude. We are not cursed with European spirits. In our colony it is a criminal offence to sell or give to a native distilled liquor; but, without our help, they have found for themselves an intoxicating drink which they brew from a millet grain. I have already written about the great social evils that arise from village drunkenness, and need not say more. The native Church has imposed upon itself a self-denying ordinance, and agreed that all who enter the catechumenate or the Church must be total abstainers from beer.

These two outstanding social evils are the most public barriers to obedience to Christ. Other superstitions and cruel habits are also denounced and plainly declared to be contrary to the new way. And it is in leading men out of conduct which is sanctioned by their own customs that the chief difficulty for the evangelist appears.

One day one of my teachers arrived in a village near his own home after a long tramp from a sacramental season at Loudon. He had an ulcer on his foot, and was lame. When he sat down at the kraal-gate an old man greeted him and said :

" You are very lame. Where have you been ? "

" I have been at Loudon," he answered.

" That is a long way from here. What made you take such a journey ? "

" I was hungry, and went to be fed. I had such a feast of fat things."

" What kind of feast was this ? " asked the old man eagerly. And the teacher told him very simply about the message of Christ. When he had finished the old man said :

" Now, that is good news. What must I do to be a Christian ? "

Then the teacher spoke to him about obedience to Christ and following Him ; and when he had opened it up somewhat fully the questioner said :

" Now, if God would only say to us old people, ' Retain your polygamy and continue your drunken habits,' there's not a man of us in the village who would not rise and follow Him."

That was plainly and truthfully spoken, for to all the Gospel truths these Africans offer full assent, but to obey is another matter. It is here that one must recognize the supernatural element in all our work, for thousands of the people, without offer of reward, seem to have yielded themselves to God, and that in spite of the feebleness and

ignorance of the native agents who have been their preachers.

Our work, however, does not end at an open profession of faith. Its greatest responsibilities only commence there. Let no one say that the missionary exists to "make converts" and increase statistical records. For this is simply not true. It might be easy to enrol hundreds of nominal Christians whose lives have not been tested, and whose intelligence has not been trained. But of what value for the present or the future would be such a Church of baptized heathen? One could not find in them any redemptive power for the nation, but could rather foresee a menace to the ethics and intelligence of the future.

The chief anxiety and labour of the missionary is not up to the point when men and women decide to follow Christ, but from that point onwards when he seeks to form in them "the mind of Christ." He must be jealous for the ethical standard of those who profess to be His disciples, for they represent Him to the world as the "body of Christ."

Hence the road which a convert must travel before he is received into the full membership is somewhat long. We enter him in the inquirers' class, where for a year he studies the Gospel and the commandments. Then he is tested by personal examination, and his conduct is judged by the Christians of his community before he is admitted to the catechumens' class. Here he remains for eighteen months at least, learning a doctrinal and ethical catechism and going through a course of lessons in the Bible until he is ready for examination for Church membership. Then he has a personal interview with an elder of the church and the European missionary, and if they find him intelligent and judge him to have yielded himself to God, and if the native Church approve of his village conduct during his probation, he is received into the full membership of the Church by baptism.

Now, it is no easy matter to teach and control and dis-

cipline those who are members of the Church. They are scattered over a great area, and there are only two European stations. At the end of 1912 there were more than 3500 men and women in full communion, besides 4000 catechumens, and more than 3000 baptized children of Christian parents. The pastoral supervision of these by the missionary is an impossibility, but we have happily a great band of over a hundred native elders who most carefully fulfil their pastoral responsibilities, knowing intimately the conduct of the Christians in their districts, guiding them in difficulties, and jealously guarding the purity of their public life. Discipline of unworthy members is particularly applied, and the high standard of ethics which should differentiate the Church is carefully maintained. This, alas ! is done far too frequently by the last resort of suspending the unworthy or removing their names from the Church books.

The elders and deacons who develop the liberality of the Christians and look after the poor and needy are divided into groups of a dozen or more. Over these groups evangelists preside, acting as assistant pastors and preparing the way for the day which we hope is drawing near, when each group will be formed into a separate parish with a native ordained minister in charge.

Now, I shall at once admit that the glory of mission work is not to be found in the perfection of the Church organization, but in the transformed lives of its members, and the test of the means used to nurture the Church must be the growing likeness of the Christians to their confessed Lord and Master. If one were to judge the native Christians by European standards, comparing their conduct with that of men and women who have inherited centuries of Christian tradition, I fear one's impression would sometimes be gloomy enough. But when we place their lives in contrast with the surrounding heathen from whom they have been called, they shine like stars in a dark firmament.

I shall not attempt to measure the goodness or the power that is in the Church, but let me indicate at least some of its effects that I myself have seen. I have spent one night in a drunken village, and have heard the adults shout their filthy songs through the long night, and have seen the little children being taught by their mothers to dance obscenely. And the next night I have camped before the door of a Christian's house in a Christian village, and when bed-time came and all was silent in the village as I was dropping asleep I heard the father conduct worship with his family, catechizing them and praying with them. It was a sweeter sound to sleep to than the noise of the previous night.

I have seen the beggarly shelter in which some poor old widows were housed in the rainy season, open to rain and cold, comfortless and filthy. They had no power to erect a decent hut, and their heathen friends had no use for them. And I have seen the Christian boys spending days, while they were still busy with their own houses, building a goodly dwelling for some poor widow.

I have seen the body of a little baby lying in a stream, thrown away by its own mother because its upper teeth had appeared before its lower, and I have seen the tender care of a Christian mother for her weakly twins and deformed children, whom she had accepted as a gift from God worthy all her maternal love.

I have seen the sickly children left to starve by drunken parents who preferred beer to nursing, and others dying of hideous burns, who had rolled into the fire while the parents slumbered under the influence of drink. And I have seen, too, the long, tender watchfulness of a Christian father and mother for their little ones who lay sick and helpless.

I have seen the terror of approaching death in the heathen's eyes, and heard his wild charges of witchcraft against those whom he hated, and on whom he would revenge himself on his death-bed. And I have seen, too, the

triumphant passing of the Christian, who with prayer and song and exhortation to holiness said a loving farewell to his friends before going to meet the great Friend who had changed him.

I know men and women whose lives were drunken, whose conversation was filthy, and whose passions were demoniacal, changed to sober-living, clean-talking, kindly and compassionate people. I have seen dull eyes that looked about with a listless lack of intelligence lighting up with a new knowledge that sweetened the face and smoothed out its coarse lines when the knowledge of Christ had dawned upon them. And I have been in villages whose churlish inhospitality and stupid fear made one's visit a painful memory, and again returned to find their atmosphere changed to frank and cheerful hospitality and an easy friendliness when the Gospel had been proclaimed and taught there. And I know men whose hands were red with the blood of the slain, and whose kraals were stocked with what they had robbed, becoming peaceable citizens of the kingdom and fervid evangelists of the message of peace.

These things which I know and see convince me, at least, that there is no such transforming power in the world as the revelation of the love of God in Christ.

CHAPTER XXVI

A DAY ON THE STATION

IT is Wednesday morning and the dawn has broken when the house-boy appears at my bedside with a cup of tea and bread. When I have sipped the tea the struggle with sleep is finally over, and after a cold bath the morning is sparkling and all the heaviness of the night is past. As the sun rises the watchman has begun to ring the church bell, and I go down to morning service. Birds are singing on the trees, the air is crisp and still, and the grass is sweet with heavy dew. The red sun is sending cool beams through the bank of leafy wood, and there is no bite in them yet, so I walk along bareheaded, drinking in the joy of the morning.

In church twenty or forty people have already gathered. They are nearly all employees, with the exception of the little boarders and some of the patients from hospital and the few people who live on the station. Our service is short : a hymn is sung, a passage from Scripture read and explained, and then prayer, ending with the Lord's Prayer and benediction. As soon as the little service is over the workers gather at the vestry door and the roll is called, and all are dispersed to their various bits of work.

Then I busy myself dispatching messengers. Some boys are going a week's journey to the Institution to bring back loads of books and school material for the store ; others are sent to out-schools with notes to teachers, or supplies for their schools. A swarm of others are restlessly clamouring for work. Are there no logs to be drawn to the saw-pit ?

Is no brick-making to be started ? Are no carriers wanted for a journey ? And if there is no opportunity for workers I am besieged with protests. " We are naked. Where shall we get cloth ? " " Our taxes are not paid. How shall we get money to pay them ? " But as my work is not to clothe the tribe and pay their taxes, but to conserve very carefully the little grants the mission gives me, I turn a deaf ear and leave them expostulating.

When all these little jobs are completed I start off to superintend the workers. The carpenter's shop must be visited. There are three or four lads sawing and hammering and planing. They have a great faculty for doing things in a wrong way and spoiling good wood, and they need the most constant supervision. One is making windows for native houses. Two others are busy with little tables for the school, and another is sawing up wood for doors. A few minutes are sufficient to see that measurements are correct and all the processes understood, and then I go off to see the other labourers.

Perhaps some little brick house is being erected. Then one must see to it that the plumbing is correct, that the guiding strings are being followed, that the supplies of water, building mud, etc., are coming in due time, and that the bricklayers are not kept idle for lack of them.

At seven o'clock there has been a prolonged tolling of the bell, and files of children have been entering the station. When the bell stops they are drawn up in lines and drilled for a few moments by their head teacher, and then all march into the school-house, and soon the sound of the morning hymn is heard. There was a time when I would have required to neglect all other work and conduct the school myself, but the powers of the teachers have grown since then, and all I do is to pass round the classes and see that all is going well.

And now I rejoice in a European colleague whose delight

and speciality is the school work, and I may throw on him my responsibilities for education.

By the time this short visit is over breakfast is waiting at home, and I return to my family with a furious appetite. There is porridge on the table made of some ground cereal of the land, with rich cream from the cattle in the kraal, and bread made of the flour of wheat grown in this land. There are chicken or eggs that have been bought from the villagers, and coffee grown at the Institution. The appetizing table provides little that has not been grown or bought in this land of plenty.

When the meal is over and various household duties attended to I return to my office, which is the vestry of the church. A native clerk is there busy with a typewriter, or turning on the Roneo hundreds of copies of some circular to the teachers. He is a shy, pock-marked lad, with a fine capacity for work, and a temper that never gets ruffled. I have seen a score of men about him, each clamouring to be attended to, handing in their school returns, waiting for their pay, or trying to force their little notes on his attention, and over all the din not an impatient word is heard from him as he attends to each in succession with that nervous smile on his face which cannot come off. I have never known him do a dishonest thing or say an angry word. To me he is invaluable.

Now, the office is a public place to which any one may resort, and there one may not count on any prolonged privacy. Perhaps I am busy at the books of the station when a knock comes to the door. "Come in," I shout, and there is a wild pushing at the door. "Turn the handle," I shout again, and there is a sound of some one roughly grasping the handle and turning it back and forward. No door handle in this land can stand for long the furious assaults that are made upon it. We used to blame the miserable quality of the material supplied us for every lock

going wrong, but now I know that no ironmongery yet made for a house door can stand the aimless pullings and twistings that the native can give it. At last, as the secret of opening a European door remains undiscovered, I rise and open to the visitor. He is one of a little batch who have come from some distant school to be examined for entrance to the Church. Now Wednesday is not one of the stated days for such interviews, but I cannot turn them back fifty or a hundred miles and tell them to come on the appointed days. What are they to eat till Friday or Tuesday comes round? So I take them in one by one, and after scanning the slip they bear from their elder, and looking up the roll-book to see whether their attendance at class has been regular, I sit down to examine.

The applicant is very nervous. I can see the wild beating of his heart, and beads of perspiration stand out on his forehead, and if he has a slight stammer it is dreadfully accentuated. So I must be patient, and begin with the simplest questions which he is sure to answer. Then gradually, as he gets confidence, I lead on to more difficult ones. But when I would find out his real thoughts and his inner life, he answers by rote, and the secrets are not disclosed. Again and again by paths he has not expected me to tread I try to approach. But this is the hardest part of all, and in the end I shall probably have to make my judgment on his formal knowledge and on what the native elder knows of him. Some will come who meet me with a frank, bright look, and talk openly as those who have handled and tasted the eternal things; others will come whose shyness closes every window of their inner man; and still others who sit stupid and unable to answer, their unfitness proclaimed by their first sentences. But it is a hard thing to reject any. The disappointed may sit outside weeping, or wait all day to see whether you will not give them another chance. And, indeed, if you are just, you will try some of them again, for

in their eagerness they have pressed for an immediate interview, though they were dead tired with their long journey, and hungry for lack of a meal all day. The man who has slept and eaten may be a much more intelligent being than he was when he came to you tired and hungry.

Before these interviews are over there is a growing din outside the building, the merry laughter and loud talking of a crowd of young people. It is marriage-day, and ten o'clock is the hour for the ceremony, and the jolly crowd outside has come to see their friends through the ordeal.

When the hour arrives the old beadle, who has been flitting out and in and taking long, careful looks at the watch on the vestry table, now goes out and rings the church bell, and the clerk passes into the church to arrange the couples and lay out the marriage register and pens and ink. As soon as all is quiet and orderly I go into the church. It is a weekly occasion, this marriage service, and there are four or five couples sitting before the pulpit waiting to be made man and wife. The bridegroom is dressed in his best clothes, possibly a ludicrous combination of European dress and native costume; the bride is arrayed in new bright clothes, and hangs down her head, overcome with shyness. There are several hundreds in the church, all friends of the parties to be married, who have travelled with them from their distant villages. The men, who sit on one side of the church on mats, have on their ordinary clothes; but the girls, on the other side, are gay with necklaces of lions' and leopards' claws, with shining brass collars, and long strings of little beads hanging from their necks or bound tightly round their heads, and perhaps a bright crimson flower stuck in their hair.

The service goes on, and when the bridegroom stands up with his bride to make his vows he answers in a strong, bold voice; but the bride is shy, very shy if she has been well educated, and she resists when her swain would take her

hand. She stands with her head bowed low and averted, her left hand thrown over her right shoulder, and her right hand unwillingly extended to her husband, who grasps it firmly lest she take it away. There constantly appears some bride whose shyness makes her "dour." She will not answer the questions, not even nod her head. And then there is nothing for it but to drop the couple and go on to another. I may have suspicions that the marriage is not to her liking and her parents have forced her into it. But when she sees that I seriously mean to leave her alone unless she utters a free assent, she rises again and this time answers clearly. Once or twice I refused to marry, though no objections were made to the banns or at the service, but because the bride refused to speak. And then I discovered afterwards that the poor girl had taken this silent method of protesting against a marriage that was being forced on her.

When all is over and the register signed, the people file out of church, and each party goes its separate way accompanied by its bevy of gaily dressed girls who clap their hands and sing choruses as they follow the blushing bride. And all the time they are passing through the station elderly matrons are good-humouredly shouting after her directions for her married life, impressing on her that if she would retain the love of her husband she must "feed the beast," and sweep the house, and do other praiseworthy domestic duties.

When the marriage parties have started homewards I return to the office and find there another group of young people awaiting me. They carry a note from their elder to say that this party desires marriage, the dowry has been fully paid by the intending husband, and the parents have consented to the wedding. So, after hearing the witnesses confirm this and finding out the church-standing of the couple and seeing that they are both old enough (for we have had a long, stiff battle against too early marriages), I write

out the banns and send them home rejoicing to return again when these have been duly proclaimed.

Again I return to my table and books and try to bury myself in them, but am soon interrupted by the sound of coughing outside and clubs being dropped on the ground. This is the true African door-bell, so I ask the clerk to see who are there and what they want. He opens the door and discovers one of the neighbouring chiefs; we invite him to enter, and he stalks in accompanied by half a dozen of his men who sit about the door. We exchange greetings, and I lay aside my pen and try to appear unoccupied. The chief looks it to perfection. He is a bloated-looking figure, tall and dignified enough, but every line on his face proclaims aloud his indolent and drunken life. He takes snuff from one of his men, and coughs to show its strength and his appreciation of it. Talk is not lively; we make remarks on the weather, on the state of the gardens, on the latest cattle disease. I try to ascertain whether he has come on any particular business. "No, he was passing near the station, and thought he would come to see me." My work is lying about me in heaps, time is so short, and there is so much to do. But for the chief it is infinitely long, and there is nothing to do. So we sit there, I restless, he entirely at his ease. Soon all conversation stops, and we can find nothing to say. If I agree to it he will sit there a couple of hours and never weary. But I know one thing that will make him find urgent business at home, so I begin to speak to him about religion. He grows restless. Then I press one or two personal points, and he answers with polite agreement; but it has dawned on him that possibly the office is not so cool as he thought it was, and soon he rises, giving me a courteous good-bye, and goes to seek the nearest beer-pot.

By this time noon has arrived, and the bell is rung and answered by joyous shouts from the workers let loose, and

I leave the office glad for the noon break of two hours. By this hour one's physical powers are very exhausted, and after a light lunch one wants nothing more than to lie on a couch, reading, and perhaps drop off to sleep for ten minutes.

Again the bell rings, and although the sun is still blazing with a fierce heat the workers return to their various jobs, but not so smartly as they left them. Another round of visits is necessary to ensure that work begins promptly, and to correct and direct what remains to be done in the afternoon. Then I go back to the office, and get a short, uninterrupted spell of work, when few visitors call. But meanwhile the senior English school is in full progress and must be visited, and possibly some lesson taught. Only a few pupils are present, perhaps thirty or forty, and nearly all are teachers from the surrounding schools who, having finished their morning work, have now come in for further instruction.

At four o'clock, when the sun is getting low, the church bell is ringing again, this time for the mid-week prayer-meeting. Now all work stops. The labourers gather with us, and numbers of Christian villagers also come until perhaps a hundred are present. Possibly one of the elders may relieve me of the little address and of the conduct of the meeting; but the preaching is only a short item in the service. The main thing is prayer, so once or twice the meeting is thrown open for prayer, and numbers lead shortly. Sometimes the women take part, and pray in a low voice which it is hard to hear. The old station *capitao* (foreman) is sure to be heard, and we all know what he will say. He will begin with a resounding address, "Jehovah, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob," and he will pray for the Church and for backsliders and for the heathen without, and then he will pray for the Europeans and their families with great particularity. And all the time his voice, which began in the strong, slow bass of the Ngoni, has been

sinking lower and lower until we can scarcely hear and are not sure he has finished. Still, it is good to hear the old man pray. It is many years now since he shaved off his warrior's head-ring and turned aside from the great beer-pot, and there are not many of his age and standing among the Ngoni who have obeyed and followed the Evangel. When the old beadle leads us, his slightly tremulous voice calls up the luscious images of Samuel Rutherford's letters. Every petition is expressed in metaphor, and every day these are fresh and wonderful: "Take us, Lord Jesus, to Thy great breast, as a mother would her little child." "Put Thy hoe into the garden so full of weeds and undergrowth, and plant with the best of maize. Water Thy garden with gentle showers until it is heavy with food." And so on he goes, and as he prays we know that a good man and a tender husband and a fervent evangelist is leading us.

When the meeting closes the sun is already dipping far down to the horizon and the day's work is over, and all that remains for us is a little gentle exercise before the dark falls and we retire to the quiet and privacy of our homes.

CHAPTER XXVII

A WONDERFUL CONVENTION

I HAVE already said that it has been our habit to hold an annual convention at Loudon, to deepen the spiritual life of the Church and to teach some of the vital truths of Christianity. To accommodate the crowds who came to this gathering we used to erect sheds of fresh branches. But the annual destruction of wood about us became so serious that we had at last to erect five great hostels, built in quadrangular fashion, of poles, plastered with mud and thatched with grass. These huge caravanserai are capable of holding between two and three thousand guests and are constantly occupied. Visitors who come to the weekly wedding ceremonies, candidates for entrance to the classes, the teachers who spend a month with us once a year, and the thousands of people who attend the bi-monthly sacramental gatherings, all use these shelters, and find them pleasant and comfortable, though no luxuries, not even mats to sleep on, are provided.

Year by year the conventions have grown in power. One has clearly seen the intelligence of the people increase so that deeper truths which some time ago would have been meaningless to them can now be taught to intensely receptive congregations. Usually some of my fellow-missionaries come to assist me with the long strain of the daily services, and their fresh ways of presenting familiar truths have reached home to the people.

When we heard in 1910 that a visit was to be paid to the

missions in Central Africa by Mr. Inwood, a deputy from the Keswick Convention, we decided to make our annual gathering coincide with his visit, and to use to the full this first visit of a preacher from Europe. For months before he came we did our best to rouse the expectations of the people, and spoke much on the great good that might come to them were they athirst for truth, and obedient. As the month of the convention drew nearer daily prayer-meetings were started, until there were about a hundred of them being held, when the Christians confessed their shortcomings and prayed for the Power of God to rest on the convention and its missioner.

As the novelty of the visit, as well as the expectation aroused, would be sure to attract unmanageable thousands, we arranged that no one would be allowed to come to the station to attend the meetings without a ticket of admission, and we distributed between two and three thousand of these tickets among the elders, that they might give them to selected delegations of Church members and catechumens. In this way one hoped to have a choice and intelligent audience who would make the most of their opportunity, and who would call forth the best that the missioner had to give us.

Just before the convention began I travelled down to Mvera to attend a united conference of missionaries, and there met Mr. Inwood. When this gathering broke up a large company of us travelled north together, spending a week on the journey. All the way along I was conscious of the atmosphere of prayer that surrounded us, and at noon felt as if I could hear the cries to God going up from a hundred prayer-meetings. We arrived at Loudon on a Saturday and rested till Tuesday, when the visitors began to arrive. Each delegation came in procession to our dwelling-house singing, and there awaited our greetings, and welcomed Mr. Inwood. The ordinary stranger could

not help feeling the thrill of these singing regiments. It was picturesque indeed, and very African. The women were in the centre, and carried on their heads baskets containing cooking-pots and foodstuffs for the coming week. The men were ranged on either side, some carrying goatskins filled with meal, and all with their long sticks and spears raised on their shoulders. They marched up the broad road slowly, singing their recitative choruses, and when they came to the white sand in front of our house, they stood there to finish their hymn, while we waited on the verandah. The stranger Europeans who were with us felt the fascination of the arrivals, but none more than I, though by its annual repetition the scene had become familiar to me. There I saw men and women whose histories I knew, some who had been drawn out of a "fearful pit," some who had records of bravery and of dastardly cruelty, too, in the old days, some who had come to Christ with grey hairs and bowed bodies, to give Him only the evening of their lives. And when the companies from the far Marambo came, having spent a week on the road, my heart melted. One saw again the filthy stockaded villages, the timid, ignorant, and naked paganism of the days when we had gone there twelve years before to declare the gospel of liberty for the first time. Here they are now, from these same people, clothed, washed, alert with new life, marching into the heart of the land of their former enemies, none making them afraid. It is at such moments as these that one feels again there is no life so highly privileged as that of a foreign missionary.

On Wednesday morning the convention opened with a prayer-meeting. At ten o'clock and again at two o'clock Mr. Inwood spoke. That was the daily programme. The addresses were given in English, and sentence by sentence I interpreted into the Tumbuka language. Friends who had heard of our purpose, wrote to me greatly doubting the possibility of making any impression on our people by

interpretation. But while one recognizes that this method of address has great disadvantages, the history of religious movements gives many an instance where it has been supremely effective. One great advantage attends it. You cannot get up a purely physical emotion by interpretation, the constant interruption of the address arrests the emotional spell which the speaker might cast upon his audience.

Indeed, as the meetings went on my doubting heart got very depressed at times, lest the great lessons were not gripping ; and some lack of attention especially on the part of the women went to confirm my doubts. Mr. Inwood spoke on the ascending scale with which all frequenters of Keswick and such conventions are familiar. Beginning with a severe probing of the sins which creep into the Christian's life, he led on to the redemption of Christ, and a bold declaration of the power of the living Christ to save from a present power of sin. He appealed for entire dedication to God, and expounded the great mystery of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in men.

When Friday evening came, the Europeans gathered together in our sitting-room for prayer. Some of us were oppressed with the feeling that the days were passing, and the grip of the conference had not tightened, but Mr. Inwood himself was sure that God was fulfilling His purposes in His own way, though we did not recognize it. I fear our missioner must have had a stiff pull if he had only what we saw to encourage him, and had also my doubts and fears to pull against. But he saw more truly than we did. For at the very time we were praying together in the sitting-room, our sixty elders were meeting in a schoolroom. They had gathered at five o'clock to confer and pray, and hour after hour passed while they were still there. Prayers succeeded prayers, and confession succeeded confession. Then one who had not been at peace with a fellow elder came to him asking forgiveness, and humbling himself, and soon the

schoolroom was full of reconciliations, and men wept as they confessed to one another their faults and cried to God for pardon.

On Saturday morning when we met with a few in the vestry for prayer before going into the church, there was great freedom, but the elders were still waiting for the climax of all. "Lord, we are so hungry, and we are not satisfied," cried one. And the beadle joined in with his usual wealth of metaphor. "Sharpen, Lord, the arrows Thou art shooting, until the whole heart is wounded, then come Thyself as the living Medicine."

When the service began it was soon evident that the congregation was joining with a greater intensity than before. The sermon was scarcely opened when a young man began to sob hysterically. He was at once removed, and every precaution taken that we might go soberly on. Mr. Inwood was speaking on the Holy Spirit. At the close of his sermon, which with interpretation must have lasted one hour, all was very quiet. He asked for a time of silent prayer, and then called on those who were willing to receive the fullness of the Spirit to rise. No one rose. After a time two or three stood, but evidently with a struggle. Then an elder began to pray, confessing before all the sin of having cherished a spirit of revenge for an evil done him. Then another began to pray, and another and another, till two or three were praying together in a quiet voice, weeping and confessing, each one unconscious of the other. And then suddenly there came the sound of "a rushing mighty wind." It was the thrilling sound of two thousand five hundred people praying audibly, no man apparently conscious of the other. I could think of no better image to describe the noise than the rushing of wind through the trees. We were listening to the same sound as filled that upper room at Pentecost. Not noisy or discordant, it filled us with a great awe. Soon some began to cry out in unrestrainable agony,

and we knew that unwholesome physical excitement would presently break out unless the meeting were controlled. I started a hymn. None seemed to hear aright in the pervading sound, but each man and woman sang, and sang what was uppermost in his heart. It was overwhelming to look down from the pulpit at the audience singing away, every one with closed eyes, singing what his heart prompted. And for two or three minutes no tune could be discerned but that of a mighty volume of tumbling waters, until at last the minor Scottish Psalm tune "Selma" prevailed, and the words of confession to which it is set in our hymn-book.

When the hymn closed and the benediction was pronounced the congregation dispersed, no man speaking one word to his neighbour. And had one gone out to the bush around or through the caravanserais one would have seen men and women praying on their knees, or sitting with open Bibles before them. But among the thousands there one would have heard no sound of human talk.

In the afternoon we divided the people so as to have them more under control. The women were to meet in the school quadrangle with my wife and the other ladies, the men were to gather in the church. A little before worship should begin I went down to the station square, in the midst of which the church stands, to see that the congregations gathered in orderly fashion. Not a man was to be seen in the square, not a sound was audible anywhere. At first I thought the hour of meeting had been misunderstood, and the people were still in their sleeping-places. But when I went to the church door I saw the church full of men quietly waiting, and on the other side of the square the school quadrangle was already filled with women. Three thousand were sitting in their places, and over all was a solemn silence.

Mr. Inwood took the men's service in the church. He spoke again on the Holy Spirit, and was listened to with

LOUDON CHURCH

About 7000 people gave free labour to erect this church. The walls are of brick, and the roof is thatched with grass. The open-air pulpit is seen near the tower. From this we sometimes address 6000 people.

INTERIOR LOUDON CHURCH

There are no seats. The people sit on the long mats. Part of the nave is shown here. The transepts are screened off and are opened for the monthly sacramental gatherings.

LOUDON HOSPITAL

It has a male and a female ward. There are also a waiting-room, operating-room, dispensary, and other rooms. It was partly erected by free labour, and about 4000 patients attend the dispensary every year.

great eagerness. When he closed, again we had open prayer. At first it began with quiet confessions, then suddenly, without a moment's notice, the overwhelming outburst again began. The whole audience was praying audibly. I came down from the pulpit and passed up and down the passages trying to quieten one or two who were on their feet crying loudly, " Oh, pray for *me*, I am a fearful sinner," cried one young man, seizing my arm as I passed. And in all the prayers there was this note of personal conviction.

Soon the scene became unbearable, and signs of severe physical excitement were again beginning to appear. So I stepped on to the platform, and asked for quiet. In a moment the building was hushed and I closed with a prayer of dedication.

Meanwhile, at the women's meeting, prayer had gone on unceasingly. Sometimes a score were on their feet at once praying together with no apparent consciousness of one another. Old grandmothers and young girls would be standing together praying at the same time, and pouring out to God their personal longings. There was no need of a speaker. All my wife had to do was to check the torrent of prayer now and then with a hymn, or by reading a passage of Scripture when signs of strained emotion began to appear.

When Sabbath came we met in the open air. All were admitted to this service, and about 7000 were present. Under a shingled roof which stands over the raised platform the missioner could easily speak so as to be heard at the outskirts of the crowd. Thousands of the heathen had come, for already the report of the wonderful events of Saturday had spread over the district, and they came with wonder in their hearts. But not a few ran farther away, refusing to come near the station lest they too should be drawn in.

The address was a plain, frank evangelistic appeal, chiefly intended for the multitude who had gathered from the villages around, and again when it closed the overwhelming

scenes followed, souls crying out in agony, women standing up quivering with dreadful emotion, and some, too, with a great light upon their faces pouring out the joy and thankfulness of their hearts to God, for that they had seen Him face to face.

In the afternoon we gathered at the Lord's Table a company of 1250 Christians, who met for a truly eucharistic service.

At night we would have liked to have held a closing service for all, but we feared for what might happen to a great meeting in a dimly lighted and crowded church, while strange emotions were mastering them. So we gathered some three hundred teachers and elders together in a side room, and had a meeting of such calm rejoicing, and eager receptiveness, as I have never seen. Each European spoke, and when we closed we sang the Doxology, but no sooner had it finished than it burst out again.

On Monday morning at dawn, I was awakened by a man shouting aloud, his voice quivering with emotion, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!" He had just stepped out of his house after his night's sleep, and this was his salutation to the dawn.

When two or three days had passed we started out with Mr. Inwood to hold a two days' convention at Chinde's, sixty or seventy miles away. All along the route of our journey we saw how deeply the tribe had been stirred by the strange events of the past week. When we rested at Milala for lunch on the first day out, we found a thousand people waiting us, that they might have a message from the stranger. And after a little rest we gathered together in the school and had a service awful in its solemnity. In the evening we waited a while at the Government station where we found that Mr. Hughes, the collector, had arranged for his police and workers to gather that they, too, might hear something of what had so strangely moved the tribe. And we held a

short service where eager, solemn faces looked up, drinking in with an intense wistfulness every word that was spoken.

When we got to Chinde's we found a huge concourse of people gathered, and immediately services began. On Sunday not less than six thousand met under the shade of a large tree, and listened to a fervid evangelistic appeal that seemed to be most fruitful in its results.

Thereafter, Mr. Inwood went on to Ekwendeni, and then to Bandawe and Livingstonia, holding conventions similar to that he had held at Loudon, and with the same mighty and awe-inspiring results.

Meanwhile, we started to hold a series of local conventions all over our district, one every week for eight or nine weeks, seeking to produce permanent and ethical fruits from the deep impressions which were abroad. Almost everywhere we had the same crowded audiences, the same solemn atmosphere, the same victories and rejoicings.

"What an emotional story!" some one will say. I admit it is a tale of strong emotion. But why should we be so suspicious of the free expression of deep feeling? We do not want to super-impose on those sons of Africa our expressionless Scottish characters. If God has given to these people who live under sunny skies and in soft airs, natures that respond quickly and audibly to outside influences, why should we not rejoice when they sing because the Spirit of God has touched them? To those whose ears are opened to heavenly music, there is no sound so sweet and entrancing as that of souls rejoicing because they have met with the Lord Himself.

Did the whole movement merely express itself in a passing emotion, I too should be sceptical of its good, but I believe its tendencies were all towards righteousness. We told our evangelists to discourage any physical manifestations, lest the people should attend to those rather than the spiritual, and by systematic instruction we tried to lead their very

receptive minds into deeper truths, and to an expression in conduct of their devotion to Christ. We saw feuds healed, debts paid, the widowed and lonely befriended, a spirit of brotherly kindness created in villages whose atmosphere was bitter with quarrels. Prayer became a joyful and real communion with God. The Bible spoke as the living Word of God. Christians entered into diligent service of the Church. Heathen were brought to the feet of God. The tribe was moved to its depths with a conviction that God was among us.

These were fruits worth seeing. And although the intense fervour of the movement soon died away, there has been left to the native Church an inheritance which has greatly enriched it, a memory of the rapture and power that comes when God reveals Himself to men, a longing for renewed displays of His glowing presence, and an intense conviction that there is no power in the world so irresistible as the power of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A VISIT TO THE SENGA

IN Chapter VII I have given some account of the opening up of the Loangwa Valley to mission work. Shortly after that visit we were able to start three schools to which we sent Ngoni teachers. Year by year these schools have been held and extensions have been made until we have now between thirty and forty village groups occupied. The population is very scattered, though the villages are mostly moderately big. The area covered by these schools is about ten thousand square miles. Every year a visit has been paid to those in the northern area by the European missionary at Ekwendeni, and to those in the middle and southern area by the European missionary at Loudon. Other sections of this great western area have been occupied by extensions from the other older stations of the mission. These annual tours have been very trying sometimes, especially if the hot season was drawing on, as the country is low-lying and waterless; but the interest of them is always peculiarly strong. At first we worked entirely by Ngoni teachers, but as the intelligence of the Senga grew and a small local church began to arise we were able to select a few Senga to be monitors, and they gradually increased in educational value until they were able to take up the work of teachers.

The Senga people, however, have always asked for Ngoni for their schools, partly because we were able to send more senior and advanced youths than were to be found among

their own people, and partly because they brought with them a prestige and authority which clung to them from the days when they were the raiders and conquerors. We had to use great care in the selection of the teachers we sent, for the moral temptations that were put in their way were very great. And it is a matter for much thankfulness that only one or two succumbed to these insidious and aggressive temptations through all these years.

In 1905 an attempt was made to occupy Marambo with Europeans, when my colleagues, Dr. and Mrs. Boxer, opened a station at Kazembe. With great energy a good brick dwelling-house was erected, but all the time this work was going on Mrs. Boxer lay very ill, and the house was only occupied a week when Dr. Boxer found he must leave the country and start immediately for home if his wife were to live. She was brought to Loudon in a dying condition, and, in spite of all the skilled and loving care that was given her, she died on the lake steamer, and was buried at Fort Johnston. We greatly grieved over the loss of this bright and devoted friend. The cause of the Senga had lain very much on her heart, and it was with a great joy she found that she and her husband were to live among them. But all that she was permitted to give was these few months of work—and her life.

By 1909 we had extended the sphere of our schools across the Loangwa and along the base of the Mchinga Mountains right down to Nawalya. Here we touch the sphere which the Roman Catholic mission of the White Fathers is working. We had come to a mutual arrangement with the Catholics through the Government, by which the country we and they worked was delimited, and we agreed that we would not trespass into their sphere, nor they into ours, lest confusion and civil strife should arise through the rivalries of the competing schools.

But within a year a severe set-back was put upon the

work when sleeping sickness was found to be in Rhodesia. The Nyasaland Government immediately closed the Rhodesian border, and all communication with the Senga was cut off. Knowing that this closure was likely to be applied, I hurried across and called all the Rhodesian teachers and Christians together. We faced the crisis which had come to our work, which would prevent any Ngoni teachers being sent to carry on the schools, and after holding an examination we selected a few Senga boys to act as monitors. With these new monitors and the teachers who had been under training for the past nine or ten years, we found that by careful distribution we could occupy every one of our schools. Directions for the work of the coming year were given them in careful detail, and they were urged to do their very best and prove themselves worthy during the isolation that was coming on them. Then they were dismissed to their allocated work.

The day I got across the border I met the native police who were going out to close off all communication, and with much relief I returned home feeling that work would not be interrupted and that a way would be found to supervise the weak efforts of these local teachers. And it was so, for a few months afterwards we were able to get passes from the Government to go through and visit the schools, provided we submitted to a medical examination on our return.

Meanwhile the Rhodesian Government had appointed a Sleeping Sickness Commission, and the doctors were touring over the country examining the villagers for signs of the disease. Some cases were found west of the Loangwa among our schools there, and the consequence was that now the Rhodesian Government absolutely closed their border, forbade any communication with the infected area, and asked us not to hold our schools where the sickness was lest we should encourage the intercommunication of villages, and

by the coming together of natives give opportunity for the further spread of the disease.

This was a very sad but necessary arrangement. Our schools beyond the Loangwa were so new, and although a group of men and women who professed to follow Christ had already arisen at each school, they were still so ignorant and feeble that we could only look forward to their severance from all teaching with painful misgivings.

After some months I was able to get a special permit from the Government to travel in the Loangwa Valley, but on the condition that I did not take more than three Nyasaland boys with me.

As soon as possible I got ready for my trip, and I sent a message to all the Senga teachers to meet me at Kazembe that I might hold a month's school for them. After that was over I intended to visit various centres and dispense the sacraments, and hold special services for the Christians.

I took with me two senior teachers and my cook as my complement of Nyasaland boys. The carriers from Loudon brought my loads to the border and returned home, and Rhodesian boys met me at the border to take me on to Kazembe. There was a good road the first part of the way, so I rode my motor bicycle for twenty or thirty miles, and then leaving it in charge of a native store boy, I took to a push bicycle and on it made the rest of the tour. The track down to the valley was moderately good, but the tsetse flies have become very numerous of late. In some of the bamboo-covered river-beds where I had to dismount and push my bicycle they swarmed about me in scores and fastened on my neck and back. Some did not seem to bite very severely, but occasionally I would feel something like a red-hot needle being driven into me, and would hit out wildly to slaughter my enemy. But although scores were about me I very

seldom killed one. The natives have a curious way of killing these pests. When they see one settled on their body they take a knife and, pressing their skin with it as if to drive the blood up to the fly, they move the knife slowly along and the fly seems to get caught with the press of blood and flesh, for a quiet turn of the blade crushes it to death without its making any attempt to get away. When I sat down in a village a number of boys always gathered about me and amused themselves catching the flies that had followed me from the bush until they had all disappeared. It is a mistake to suppose that the tsetse does not go near a village and is afraid of village smoke. I have found them very irritating in some villages, and they even enter the huts and annoy the inhabitants. But, of course, there is neither shelter nor safety for them where people are, and they are not so numerous away from the protection of bamboos and low bush.

It is a notable thing that there are villages at long intervals along all the approaches to Marambo. When we went there first the land was entirely deserted, but now that the Rhodesian Government has begun to administer these lands, and that the Wemba on the west, and the Ngoni in the east, no longer send out their war parties, the original inhabitants are returning to their old gardens and hunting grounds. The minute knowledge which these Rhodesian collectors have of their people is amazing. They are constantly travelling over their wide and thinly populated districts, and by their administration of justice, by their system of opening up a network of roads, and by the opportunities they give the people of remunerative labour, they have changed the whole social condition of the people from fear to confidence, and from poverty to comparative wealth.

When we arrived at Kazembes, on the third day of our journey, we found about seventy teachers gathered for the month's school. The pleasant, cool brick house which Dr.

Boxer had built was ready for me, but we had immediately to set about providing sleeping quarters for the teachers. This was soon done by erecting a number of large square grass huts, roomy and airy, which would give them shelter from the fierce noon heat and from the chilly atmosphere of the early morning.

School immediately began with great energy. For two years these simple teachers had little opportunity for self-improvement, and they had made no advance in standard or pay; so now they were determined to use their opportunity to the full. For seven hours a day we taught, working on the ordinary school subjects, explaining the Bible and catechism, giving talks on school methods, and so on. A more eager school one could not have desired. Far into the night the lessons were continued, memorizing "questions" and verses, puzzling over arithmetical problems, and stumbling in the most painful fashion over the English Readers. Night by night I had to demand silence when the hours were far advanced so that one might get a little sleep and be ready for the next day's work.

It was a great difficulty to get sufficient food for all who attended the school. Meal could be got in abundance and at cheap prices, but the necessary relish to eat with their thick porridge was more difficult to find. I took my exercise in the early morning and evenings by visiting the places which game was known to frequent, but had very little sporting luck. Indeed, I was pursued by a most annoying ill-luck.

One morning my guide took me to where he knew I should be sure to find something, and after an hour's fruitless tramp he suddenly led me up against a fine herd of eland. There they were, within thirty yards, standing under the shade of trees, their horns laid back along their necks, their tails swishing away the flies, and quite unconscious of our presence. My guide's mouth fairly watered in anticipation of

the feast as he waited for me to fire, but I could only lay down my rifle and tell him that eland were protected, and on my licence I could not shoot them. His thought was, Who is to know what you do in this far land? But one's European conscience respected the regulations of the Government, and we turned away leaving our sweet feast untasted. Not another beast was seen that morning.

Next day we went out again before dawn, and just about sunrise came upon a nice herd of half a dozen zebra. They were feeding quietly on the short, sweet grass, and we lay within twenty yards of them. Again I had to explain that I could not shoot, for in Rhodesia zebra also are protected. With a look of infinite disgust at my honesty, the guide rose and left the zebra, and although we tramped for an hour or two longer we could not strike upon another living animal.

Next day Mr. Hall, the collector, arrived at Kazembe to spend a night with me. I told him of my difficulty in getting food for the teachers, and my bad luck in coming across only prohibited game—eland, and zebra.

"What!" he cried, "do you not know that the protection is removed? Owing to the spread of tsetse you are allowed to kill both zebra and eland. But the gnu is still protected."

"Well," I said, "I'll go out at once and slay."

So I took my gun and made off quickly for a good sporting neighbourhood. I had not gone very far when my boy caught my arm and told me to look. "What is it?" I asked. "Great beasts, splendid eating," he answered, and there was a herd of a dozen gnu approaching us! Was there ever such luck? When I sat down and refused to fire I think that boy must have cursed my conscience with ineffable words.

A day or two afterwards, however, a change took place for the better, and I began to get more than sufficient for

my hungry pupils. One evening I went out at sunset along with two boys to the hills behind our house. We had not gone half an hour when I heard the snorting of big game in the thicket through which we were passing. We fancied that a herd near at hand had been startled by the sound of our movements, so I crept along on my hands and knees towards the sound, and at last, as the night was falling, came upon a little herd of waterbuck, snorting most vigorously. But it was not I who was disturbing them. Unperceived by me, another khaki-coloured hunter was creeping towards them. At last I fired, and a fine big bull dropped. At the same moment up leaped a lion and started off to the left with what must have been a feeling of deep disgust. I had done him out of a nice savoury supper.

When the month's school was over, and the teachers from a distance had dispersed to their homes, we held a little convention at Kazembe. To this the people gathered from the villages within two days' journey, but not more than three hundred were present. It was a great opportunity for me, and for three days I tried to give them some vital teaching which would be food to them in the coming months when they were alone. It is only seven years since the gospel first came to these people, and their progress in Christian knowledge is but limited. The muddy depths of heathen immorality from which they have been drawn were very great, and some of the filth may still cling to their garments ; but there are some who have heard the call of Christ to purer living and to the sanctification of the home, and their light grows steadily brighter.

From Kazembe we had a very trying journey to Chikwa. It ought not to have been so arduous had we had more time and taken shorter stages. I have covered the same ground many a time with enjoyment. But the sun was very hot, and the distances between the water pans very long. On the second day especially the heat was most distressing, and

the tsetse flies seemed to be particularly numerous and vicious. They hung about me in clouds, following though I was cycling, and biting with positive rage. What with the fierce sun, intense thirst, a bicycle that was punctured continually on these thorny paths and that required prolonged mendings while tsetse buzzed around and stung with maddening irritation, I began to think that perhaps one had to endure a little to bring the Gospel to the Senga. And I said to myself that when I got to the village in the evening I must preach the most earnest sermon I ever preached, for it would be delivered at some cost. But alas for one's good resolutions ! When the night fell, and I had got cleaned and fed, I could only sit on a long chair in silence, much too tired to preach or be in earnest.

Next morning we started between three and four o'clock, after commending ourselves to God. It was very dark, and we felt rather than saw the narrow path as we marched along in silence. But how pleasant it was to move now when the flies were asleep and the sun was shining on Eastern Asia !

My cook marched at the head of the caravan, and we followed close behind him. He had been over this path many times with us, and felt sure of its direction. He carried my shot-gun, and a boy behind me carried my rifle. Suddenly the cook stopped—there was something dark on the path before him, and he could hear its breathing. He thought it was some wild game, and took a step nearer to look, when suddenly there burst forth the angry growl of a lion. The men shouted " Lions ! " and prepared to run. I turned to get my rifle, but found its bearer had fallen into the rear and was not at hand. The cook, who is ever a bungler, began to feel in his pockets for his cartridges, forgetting that they were already in the barrels of his gun. But before he could remember this, and most happily for him, the lion crashed off, leaving us not a little relieved

and thankful, and with an interesting subject for conversation.

Half a mile farther on there was another sudden stop. This time it was a leopard growling in front, but before we could see it, it made off. And then the dawn began to break, and the beautiful world of forest through which we were walking began to appear.

When the sun rose and the path was plain before us I mounted the bicycle and rode on ahead. About ten o'clock I got to Mtonya, which used to be Chikwa's head village. The people knew I was on the road, and a band of children had come out to meet me and race in with the bicycle. But there was nothing to race with except a somewhat tired European tramping solitarily along, for I had left my bicycle in the thicket many miles behind, hopelessly punctured, to await some carrier who would bring it into camp.

What a friendly sight those children were, the best evidence of the new peace and security that is over this land now! The day before, when I was riding with many interruptions, and somewhat desponding, I had met a number of men, women, and children who had started out on a journey in the cool of the afternoon. The men had a courteous greeting for me, the women had happy smiles for my remarks, and even the children had some bright little word. Instinctively my mind flew back to those days when we first had come among the Senga and met with a terrified reception from the villagers huddled within their great stockades.

And as I stayed on for the next few days in Chikwa's villages the contrast was ever with me. I passed through the sites of the old villages on the morning of my arrival. There I had stayed twelve years before in dirt and discomfort, within a filthy village where the houses, overrun with rats and vermin, were crowded within a great palisade of stakes, and hidden by huge thorn trees. That site was now a rich garden, and the palisade was gone. Now I had

my quarters in the old store of a trading company, just outside a neat and open village where banana trees were growing, and all day frank and friendly natives surrounded me.

When I got to my destination I found that about five hundred people had gathered for the convention I was to hold. They were well dressed, intelligent looking, most of them able to read a little, and all making some profession of Christianity. The meetings had already begun, under the guidance of one of my companion Ngoni teachers who had gone on ahead, and after I had had breakfast I was called to stand forth in all the dirt and stains of my travelling guise and begin my series of sermons.

Towards the close of the little convention I received into the Church by baptism twenty-five adults. One of them had been the husband of the chieftainess Chikwa when I arrived here first. But three or four years ago this fierce old woman had died, and her husband fled to Ngoniland to escape the death he thought was lying in wait for him at the hands of her people. He soon learned, however, that these killing days were over, and here he was living safely among them and governing what was once her head village.

The great event of our gathering was the ordaining to the eldership of two Senga Christians. They had been chosen by their fellow-Christians during a hurried visit I had paid to Marambo six months before, and now, with their ordination, we left an organized Church among the Senga.

Three days stand out in my memory of this land of great forest reaches, and blazing sun. The first is that day thirteen years ago when I first saw the stockaded villages, and met this poverty-stricken, diseased, and craven people. The next was four years after, when I was accompanied by my wife and we first spread the Table of the Lord in this land and sat down with a dozen native Christians. And now came this day, when two of these first Christians were set

apart before a solemnized congregation to be elders of the Church.

For the memory of sueh days and all that lies between them I at least cannot thank God with dry eyes. The privilege of bringing to a people the knowledge of the living Christ is unspeakable.

CHAPTER XXIX

PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS

WHEN one attempts to estimate the progress that this land has made during the last twenty-five years, one immediately recognizes that the forces at work for the awakening of the people have been very varied, and it would be absurd egotism to claim for the mission a sole regenerative agency. The raiding days did not cease simply because schools were opened and the Gospel of Peace taught. Some of the strongest fighting men would have nothing to do with the mission for years after the national raiding habits were abandoned. But every one had come to recognize, as even the Ngoni on the east side of the Lake recognized, that West Nyasa was surrounded by the strong forces of the British Administration, who now were exercising a paternal oversight of the tribes which once were the favourite raiding grounds of the Ngoni, and that trespassing into these would be followed by retribution.

The presence of trading companies and planters within the Protectorate also greatly increased the material prosperity of the people, and introduced that industry and wealth without which advancement in civilization would be impossible. These and many other agencies, combined with the widely extended influence of the mission teaching, all assisted in introducing the new era of peace and progress in which we now live.

Twenty-five years ago, practically the sole occupation of the men of this tribe was raiding. Every year at harvest

time the *impis* gathered, sometimes for a great combined excursion to the far west or elsewhere, when they would be away for weeks on end; sometimes for independent raids on the part of the chiefs to the Henga and Poka in the north, to the Tonga along the Lake shore, to the Chewa in the south, or to the Senga in the west. In these forays large numbers of captives were brought back, and quantities of live stock, and the sole wealth of the tribe was got by robbing their neighbours.

It is now many a long year since the last public raid was made. The entire military system of the tribe has disappeared. The war-dresses are rotten, and are only now seen in sport, or as curios for sale to European travellers. The wide belt of uninhabited land which used to surround Ngoniland is now covered with the scattered villages of those who have returned to cultivate the gardens of their fathers. The surrounding tribes have withdrawn from the marshes and thickets in which they hid themselves. Their stockades have disappeared, and people who piled their houses in the water of the lake now build in the open country and right up to the borders of Ngoniland. The routes that were closed by war are opened again, and the trackless forest is threaded with paths and broad roads along which men and women of every tribe and language in Central Africa may be met carrying their burdens, and fearlessly pursuing their journeys,

A British magistracy now directs the affairs of the land, and guides the work of the chiefs. Bribery is criminal. The strong are not allowed to oppress the weak. The meanest serf has equal opportunity for justice with the greatest chief.

Twenty-five years ago the people dressed chiefly in skins, and for long after the only calico in the land was the few yards that were got by working for the mission, or as tribute or plunder from some neighbouring tribe. There

NATIVE CARPENTER'S WORK

Specimens of the furniture turned out by the native carpenters. The wood is sawn in the neighbourhood. A native carpenter serves five years' apprenticeship, and can earn as a journeyman from fifteen to thirty shillings a month.

WEAVING CLOTH

This is a strong coarse cloth from the cotton grown around the village. A piece of cloth six feet by three costs about three shillings in barter goods. The industry has almost disappeared, through the introduction of Manchester goods.

was not a piece of silver or copper money in the whole country, and what wealth in cattle and live stock was in the villages was the sole property of chiefs and head men. No serf could acquire wealth, for what he had belonged to his master. No industrious native could prosper more than his neighbour, or he would be accused of sorcery.

To-day there are more than two dozen stores for the sale of European goods among the Ngoni, and almost every one of them is served by a native of this land. There are four European stations, at each of which a constant supply of labour is required. Thousands of men go south to work in the Rhodesian and Johannesburg mines, thousands of others to the various labour centres of Nyasaland, or far north to the Katanga country in the Congo Free State. Scores of builders, carpenters, sawyers, clerks, storemen, and hundreds of teachers, by their skilled labour assist to increase the material prosperity of the land. And in this tribe alone not less than £5000 a year is spent in buying European goods in the little stores, and over £2500 is contributed to Government in the paying of hut-taxes. In addition, some thousands of pounds' worth of goods are brought into the country every year by labourers returning from the south. The masters may still claim from their serfs a proportion of their earnings, and friends and relatives extort the greater part of the savings of those who have worked—that is the inevitable result of the communistic spirit of the people ; but no man can curse and ruin his neighbour for his increasing prosperity, and no man can lay hands on goods that are not his own by right of industry, without the wronged one finding opportunity for redress.

Less than a score of years ago dark superstition had the tribe by the throat. Twin children, and those whose upper teeth appeared first, were cast aside to die. The boiling-pot ordeal, and the poison ordeal were in daily use, the supreme test of innocence. Wizards terrified the people with reports

of their own cannibalism, witch-doctors by hideous rites or sly tricks tormented their patients, and robbed them of their goods. Smallpox swept at intervals throughout the land, claiming thousands of victims, and people died of festering sores and wounds from wild beasts or passionate men, because they knew of no cleansing treatment for their trouble.

To-day these hideous rites have disappeared like foul creatures of the night before the advancing dawn. Here and there the ordeals may still be administered, but in secret, for the public conscience has declared against them, and laughs at their claim to effectiveness. No mother now can openly destroy her little one. No cannibalistic wizard or artful "doctor" can terrify a community and rob it of its goods. Twenty thousand of the people have been vaccinated, and an arresting hand has been laid on the smallpox scourge. Two hospitals now stand where doctors and a skilled nurse treat five thousand patients every year, saving many a life, and restoring many a suffering invalid to health and quiet.

Twenty years ago little was to be found in the village gardens but maize and beans, and grain for beer, and every year before the crops could be harvested the villagers were for months in a state of semi-starvation, eating at the most but a scanty meal a day. Then the feeble children and sickly adults died for lack of nourishment, and the women sat listless in their villages with lean bodies, or searched in the woods for roots and berries.

Now, unless there comes a year of sore drought, few industrious men need be hungry at any season. The variety of vegetables in the gardens has multiplied at least fivefold. Patches of bananas, English potatoes, rice, wheat, and a few fruit trees can be found near some villages. And although less progress has been made in agriculture than in some other occupations, that some advance has been made is evident.

Twenty-five years ago no native in these lands had seen a book, could read a syllable, or count accurately beyond ten. There was no knowledge of the world further than they had seen with their own eyes, no history other than the tradition of their fathers. God was for them an absentee deity, and the gracious revelation of His mind was hid from them.

To-day there are scattered throughout this land two hundred and fifty schools and fifteen thousand scholars. There are five hundred natives engaged in the work of teaching, and thousands of others who can read. They have schoolbooks, and pamphlets, religious books and, above all, the Bible in the Ngoni and the New Testament in the Tumbuka language. And the whole world in which they live, and all the history of the past, and the knowledge of God may be approached by means of reading, that key to knowledge which the schools have given them.

Twenty years ago there was no native Christian in these lands. Men worshipped in their time of need the spirits of the great chiefs and of their ancestors, and crept into the dark like rabbits that they might die.

To-day there are twenty thousand in this land who profess to follow Christ, and of these more than seven thousand have been baptized as adults on profession of their faith, or as the little children of Christian parents. There are more than two hundred and fifty places of worship, where every day God's name in honoured and His evangel declared. Two great brick churches, one at Ekwendeni and one at Loudon, large enough to hold together four thousand five hundred people, stand forth by far the largest and most beautiful buildings in the land, visible reminders of the greatness and glory of the God to whose honour they were built. Sunday is recognized throughout the tribe in some fashion, and it is seldom that one can see workers in their gardens on that day. There is a general rest, if there is not general worship, one day in seven.

Yet we are not a Christian land, and the people are only on the threshold of civilization. Crime is not eliminated, drunkenness and indolence are far more evident in many a village than sobriety and industry. Of the thousands who would call themselves Christians, many are ignorant, and their lives show little change. And at the best there are still six times as many heathen as there are Christians. We are only at the dawn of the new era, but it is a dawn with the promise of a full bright day.

It is in no spirit of smug congratulation one records the changes that have come over this nation. No one knows better than we do the severe limitations which still surround every movement to better things, and the discounting that must be made for every sum of progress, but our hopes lie in facing the unaccomplished with optimism and ambition. There are perils in front which must be avoided, and problems that must be solved, if the progress of this people is to be continuous, until they step into line with the advancing nations of civilization, and with the Church which is being formed in the image of Christ.

There are great economic problems which we missionaries alone cannot solve. Government, too, must help. One might mention the whole question of agriculture. Unless the present wasteful methods are mended, the land will be deforested, and the soil become sterile, and the people will of necessity be forced every few years to flit to new and richer lands. Every such flitting puts back the tribe several years in moral and general progress. So long, too, as the natives are allowed to cut down thousands of trees when they would open new gardens, and to consider the land free for their new migrations, none will take the trouble to learn better methods of fertilization, and cultivation, and we shall soon see this well-wooded land as bare as the wide veldts of South Africa.

It seems to me that Government could not only exercise

control over the native settlements and gardens, but take an active part in encouraging right methods of cultivation. Then there are the questions of development. It does not seem likely that this country will reveal mineral wealth other than iron, nor that it will attract cotton or coffee plantations, for the soil is comparatively poor. But it has vast wealth in cattle, far greater than any other tribe in Central Africa, and some attempt ought to be made to develop this wealth. We ought to have a resident veterinary surgeon who would investigate the cattle diseases, which every year kill hundreds of animals, and Government should be ready to spend money in backing his recommendations. We ought to see better stock introduced to improve the present breed, and the natives taught how to care better for their animals. I cannot think that the only key to progress in this country is to tap its people for labour for cotton plantations and for the mines of Rhodesia, and I am sure that if Government were anxious to let them see that they are having some other return for their hut-taxes than merely payment of the magistrates' salaries, and the maintenance of native police, they would immensely increase the loyalty of the people, and impress them with a sense of their paternal altruism.

I acknowledge that some little is being done, and that Government is severely handicapped by the fact that the colony is not yet self-supporting. Vaccination of the whole people has almost been accomplished. Some roads have been made, but their purpose is more evident to the European than to the native. And a small sum of a little over £100 is allocated to education. But I have not the feeling, and the native certainly has not, that serious efforts, commensurate with the money they pay in taxes, are being made for their progress.

At the same time we must face the fact that their growing wealth may greatly materialize the minds of the people,

and that the desire for more money may swamp their better ambitions. Missionaries in other tribes nearer the labour markets have found how these temptations have militated against educational and Church work and spoiled some of the better village morals and industries. As it is, we now know something of the harm as well as the good that has come to us by the rush to the mines of South Africa. I do not think the high wages there have much hurt our local wages, for there is always a superabundance of local labour offered by those to whom the long journey south is not attractive. But there are thousands of young men who have gone south and never returned. Some of them have died, others have fallen into an immoral cesspool out of which they will never be able to extricate themselves. Away from the restraints of their village life, with more money passing through their hands than they know how to use, with seductive opportunities for vice around them, they have dishonoured their name, and will never again face their own people. I once asked one of my elders how it was that there was not a greater increase of population, considering that war no longer claims its annual tale of victims. His answer was, "There is more deadly war to-day. It is the mines of South Africa."

I see dangers and problems, too, for our schools, and they may be summed up in these words. Unless our educational system broadens and deepens with the new opportunities of each new year, we shall find ourselves in a back eddy while the stream flows past. We must not be content with the simplicity of the past. We must aim at greater efficiency, and widen the influence of the schools so that education may mean something more than a knowledge of books, and a mechanical arithmetic. Otherwise we shall not fulfil our responsibilities to the tribe.

When one looks upon the Church, the task before us seems overwhelming. There is the peril of increasing numbers, lest

the purity and true religion of the Church be swamped by a great mass of superficial formalism. When those who confessed Christ were few, and subject to much petty persecution, it was easier to scrutinize the entrants. But when it becomes the ordinary thing for every intelligent young person to proclaim himself a Christian, and through the more universally diffused knowledge to be able to answer pat all questions on religion, it is hard to see who really have come to the living Christ. Because of the great numbers who profess Him, their spiritual nurture and growth, the discipline of the unworthy, and the protection of the Church from the demoralization which inevitably sets in from cases of sin within its membership, these all become increasingly difficult. The raising up of an intelligent, God-fearing native pastorate, the increase of the spirit of liberality and of service, that the Church may not lean in dependence on European crutches, these are among our first tasks. And with them, too, must go the preparation of a suitable literature in the vernacular, that knowledge may grow from more to more, and the Church members may be wise to resist evil and follow good, and to know God.

We are only at the beginning of things, and the questions ahead are more complex than those we have left behind solved. But the future is "as bright as the promises of God." For this we do know, that we are not alone. God is with us, and all the forces that obey His will, and all the wisdom He gives so liberally, and all power are ours when we work in so holy a Fellowship.

THE END

APPENDICES

NGONI

NGONI is the root word, meaning, I believe, "the foreign people." According to Bleek, it was given to the race by the Tonga who live about Delagoa Bay, and was originally Nguni. A single individual is Mu-Ngoni, the plural Ba-Ngoni. The language is Chi-Ngoni, and the land Bu-Ngoni. The usual prefixes for the plural in Central African dialects are *ba* or *a ;* hence most Central African tribes speak of them as A-Ngoni. But it is as grammatically correct to say *a Germans* as to say *an A-Ngoni,* though the people are usually spoken of as Angoni by Europeans. The Ngoni are also known as Amangoni, Mangoni, Mazitu, Maviti, Bazowa, Batuta, Mapuli, Mangwangwara, these being local names. Under these varied appellations mention of them, in widely scattered parts of Africa, will be found in the books of Livingstone, Stanley, and numerous other travellers. If we would avoid the great variation of prefixes which are used by the differing Central African tribes, such as Aba-Ngoni, Ba-Ngoni, Ma-Ngoni, A-Ngoni, it is simpler to use the unvarying root for them and for all other tribes. So I have written throughout the root name, such as Ngoni, Tumbuka, Senga, etc.

ANCESTRY OF NGONI CHIEFS

The earliest known ancestor of the chief is Lonyanda. He was succeeded by his son Magangati, and he by his son

Mhlutshwayo, who was followed by his younger brother Mafu. On Mafu's death Zongwendaba, the son of Mhlutshwayo, succeeded. The wanderings of the people began in the days of Magangati, I think. Zongwendaba inherited the chieftainship shortly before the Ngoni arrived at the Zambesi.

The surname of the royal family is Jere (meaning a bull elephant), but it was originally Tole, and the present name was adopted some time before crossing the Zambesi.

THE NAME MOMBERA

This chief is now known among Europeans as Mombera. But his name really was Umbela (from *ukumbela*, to bury). The tendency in most Nyasa tribes is to change the *l* sound to *r*; hence he was frequently called Umbera, and Europeans, not hearing accurately, called him Mombera, which name has been practically adopted by the natives out of courtesy and deference to Europeans.

WANDERING OF THE NGONI

When Zongwendaba crossed the Zambesi internal dissension had already begun to appear among his people, and he left behind them a section under Mungwara, a Karanga leader. One day, when there was a total eclipse of the sun, Zongwendaba's followers crossed the Zambesi near Zumbo and marched into the country of the Senga. There they found a people feeble and unable to resist them, so they took their land, and for six years remained there, incorporating many of their people into the regiments. They must have gathered a number of their medicine men especially, for nearly all the "witch-doctors" of the tribe to-day are Senga.

Leaving Senga country, the Ngoni marched with only

short rests until they came to Chulu's country, a few miles to the west of where Loudon station is built to-day. Here they were in the Chewa and Tumbuka country, a land which was eventually to become the permanent resting-place of a great section of the tribe. Meanwhile, Mungwara crossed the Zambesi near Molambala Mountains with the section of the Ngoni who had remained with him, fought his way up the east side of Lake Nyasa, and there settled. To-day the Ngoni on the east side, after spending some years in Chulu's country, are called the Mangwangwara. Zongwendaba pushed on to the north, remaining for only a year or two at various points, until at last he died in the country of the Sukuma. After his death wild fighting and massacres took place over the succession. One section, which claimed the chieftainship for the children of Ntabeni Jere, a younger brother of Zongwendaba, was driven off and fled to Ugomba, where they settled, and were acting as banditti for the Rugaruga slavers when Stanley made his first memorable journey across Africa and saw their plunderous activities. But the main section acknowledged another brother, Mgai, and under him fought their way still farther north until they came within sight of Victoria Nyanza at Speke Gulf. They thought the land there too poor for settlement, and returned to Sukuma country. On the way there the elected chief died, and again disputes arose about the succession. Mpezeni, the eldest son of Zongwendaba, but not by his principal wife, was chosen chief, and the army went west to prove by its prowess his right to his kingdom. It was hopelessly defeated, however, and came back with no trophies, so his claim was not established. The main portion of the indunas then sought to give the crown to Mombera, who had been nominated by Zongwendaba as his successor. But Mpezeni would not yield up his claim, and along with his brother Mperembe led off a section of the tribe to the south end of Tanganyika,

and from thence raided as far as Bangweolo. These are the Batuta, whose neighbourhood terrified Livingstone's caravan during his last wanderings about the shores of Bangweolo.

Another division, under an induna called Zulu Gama, who aspired to chieftainship, hived off to the south and passed down to the east side of Lake Nyasa until they met the Ngoni under Mangwara (Mputa Maseko), and joined hands with them. These are the Maviti, over whose ruinous tracks Livingstone passed when he was marching from the coast to Lake Nyasa on his last expedition. They are the Mangwangwara of to-day who have caused so much trouble in the German and Portuguese protectorates.

Meanwhile in the north strife between Mpezeni and his brothers was becoming very threatening, and again a movement towards the south began. First a great induna, Chiwerewere Ndhlovu, taking with him some of the Jere children, started off with a considerable following and passed rapidly down the plateau of West Nyasa, until he settled on the hills overlooking Domira Bay, and from this point subjugated the Chewa, Chipeta, and Nyanja people. These are the Central Angoni of to-day and the Mazitu whom Livingstone met on his first journey inland from the Lake via Kasungu. Two or three years after Chiwerewere had left the main body of the tribe, with all its great indunas and most of Zongwendaba's sons, started hastily for the south, and arrived on the plateau above the Henga Valley, near the site of Ekwendeni station. From this vantage ground they swooped down on the great chief Chikuramayembe and annihilated his stockades. The election of a paramount chief then took place, and Mtwaro Jere was nominated, but he refused the office, and the indunas had now to fall back on the original choice of Zongwendaba, and appoint Mombera Jere chief of all the Ngoni. For the next six or seven years the tribe settled about the Lun-

yangwa River, and then spread out to the Kasitu Valley and subjugated all the people of this part of Nyasaland, gathering about them the Tonga, Tumbuka, Senga, Chewa, Henga, and other tribes. These are the Northern or Mombera's Ngoni of to-day.

Shortly after Mombera's people came to Nyasaland Mpezeni, who had been left on the plateau near Tanganyika, also started for the south, and, passing down the Loangwa Valley, settled finally on the hills about the present Fort Jameson. He had left his younger brother Mperembe behind him near the eruel Wemba tribe, and war after war proving too much for Mperembe, he too followed the others and joined Mombera.

This, in brief, seems to be the story of the Ngoni movements. It should be added that on the death of Mungwara the Gama seetion who had come south from Zongwendaba's people contended for the chieftainship on the east side of the Lake, and defeating Gomane, the son of Mungwara, drove him and most of his people year by year farther and farther back, until they fled across the Shire River near Matope and settled on the hills to the north. From thence they raided south and east. They are the Mazitu who struck such great terror into the hearts of Livingstone's followers that some deserted and reported his death. It was they also who had burned and slain along the Shire Valley when Livingstone was on his second expedition until the populous valley had become a blackened wilderness. To-day they are known as Gomane's or Chikusi's Ngoni.

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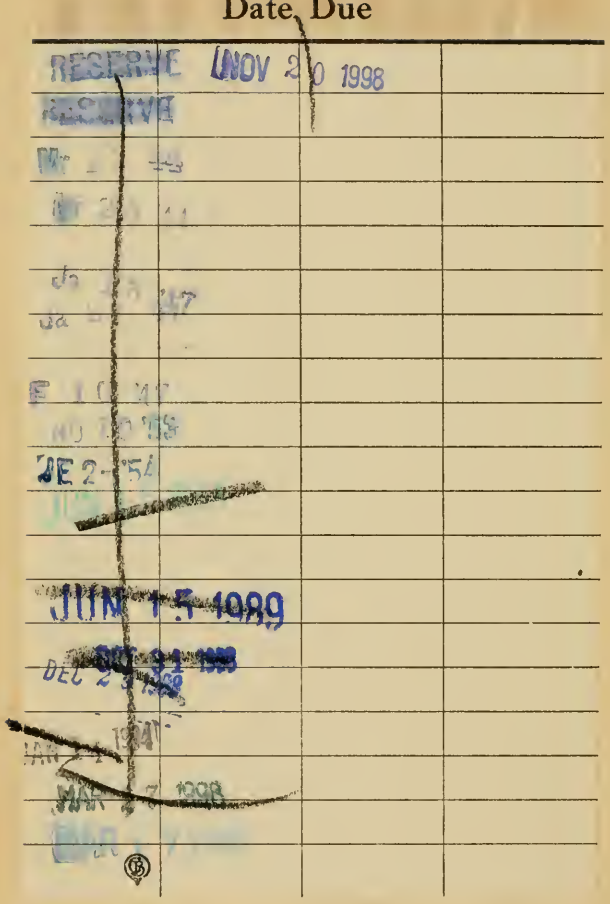
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